



**IDAHO
TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT**

Guide to Public Involvement

**FOR PROGRAMS, PLANNING
AND PROJECTS**



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ITD Guide to Public Involvement for Programs, Planning and Projects

Preface

Idaho is experiencing substantial and unprecedented growth in population, motorists and construction projects. As the need for new and expanded transportation systems increases, so does the potential impact of these projects on communities and stakeholders. Because of this, the need for public involvement in the planning, design and construction of transportation projects in Idaho is at an all-time high.

The department's adoption of a Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) approach to transportation decision-making requires an expanded vision of public involvement. To realize that vision, efforts to include all stakeholders early and often must be outlined in a public involvement plan and carefully documented.

The knowledge generated through the public involvement process is vital if ITD is to develop effective and efficient transportation projects. ITD can make better decisions by attending to public involvement planning, integrating public involvement activities into the development process, and documenting these activities.

No single process can be used to plan and design every project. Planners and project managers have the freedom to tailor community involvement to meet specific project needs. This manual provides general guidelines for anyone who is responsible for involving stakeholders in transportation decision-making.

Chapter 1: Public Involvement Overview

DEPARTMENT MISSION

ITD's mission is to "provide high quality, cost-effective transportation systems that are safe, reliable and responsive for the economical and efficient movement of people and products." This mission is fundamental to life in Idaho, where highway systems span a huge geographic area and serve more people than other modes of transportation.

To accomplish its mission, ITD must involve all stakeholders in meaningful ways. Only the community can tell the department its concerns and needs. Once ITD understands them, it can meet its public involvement goals and objectives, make sound decisions and fulfill its legal responsibilities.

Overview

The department uses public involvement processes in programming, planning and project development. Although the scope may vary and different techniques may be used, the basic principle remains the same: to establish two-way

communication aimed at incorporating the views, concerns and issues of the public in the decision-making process. The "public" can include individual citizens, elected officials, the private sector, regional and municipal planning organizations, other state agencies, federal agencies, tribes and others. Public involvement techniques are as different and varied as the projects and the people who participate.



"The U.S. Department of Transportation defines public involvement as two-way communication aimed at incorporating the views, concerns and issues of the public into the decision-making process."



Public Involvement In Project Programming

Programming refers to the department's short- and long-term project prioritization processes. The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is an example of a short-term (1-5 year) process. Updated annually, the STIP uses public input to prioritize projects. Although there is a formal review and comment timeframe (usually in July), ITD district personnel continually discuss STIP updates with their district stakeholders. (Reference: <http://itd.idaho.gov/planning/reports/stip/stipfirst.htm>)

Public Involvement In Planning Stages

Planning occurs on local, regional and statewide levels. Corridor planning is one example of local or regional planning. Statewide planning issues, such as the department's long-range vision and the development of modal plans, are overseen by ITD's Division of Transportation Planning and Programming. [www\(Reference: itd.idaho.gov/planning/reports/corrplan/corridorstart.html\)](http://www.itd.idaho.gov/planning/reports/corrplan/corridorstart.html)

Public Involvement And Highway Project Development

Because highway projects are the most common transportation projects ITD manages, this guide contains more information, in more detail, about public involvement for highway project development than for planning or programming.

Meeting Public Involvement Goals and Objectives

ITD's goal for public involvement is informed decisions. ITD strives to meet this goal through the following objectives:

- Communicating complete, accurate, understandable and timely information to the stakeholders.
- Actively gathering input from the community by providing stakeholders with meaningful opportunities to participate in processes.
- Considering and responding to stakeholder input in making decisions.
- Complying with requirements of Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964 (see <http://itd.idaho.gov/civil/T6Overview.htm>) and ensuring that all stakeholders, regardless of race, income or physical limitations have the opportunity to participate.
- Designing transportation projects that are consistent with federal and state laws and sensitive to local goals and objectives.
- Providing opportunities for early and continuing involvement.

Fulfilling Legal Responsibilities

Public involvement is mandatory in order to meet federal requirements. See Appendix 2 for a list of federal legislation, regulations and policies that guide public involvement in project development. More information about each is available on the department Web site: <http://www.itd.idaho.gov/>

DEFINING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement is the process of including stakeholders in the development of ITD transportation projects. The U.S. Department of Transportation defines public involvement as “two-way communication aimed at incorporating the views, concerns and issues of the public into the decision-making process.”

Transportation plans, and therefore individual transportation projects, are more likely to be accepted and supported by stakeholders who can see that they have had an active role in shaping the decisions embodied in the plan. Showing stakeholders that the transportation department is willing to address their concerns will set up the project for “buy in”, even if all the stakeholders are not in complete agreement with the outcome of the process.

Decision-makers can sometimes forget the importance of two-way communication, focusing solely on public education while overlooking public involvement. Both are necessary. Public education is “one-way communication intended to inform the public.” Certainly, public education is vital because it allows the department to inform people of critical issues. Public education is especially important during later phases when project construction directly influences citizens’ daily travel. However, two-way communication in the form of public involvement is important during all phases of project development.

ITD's public involvement philosophy can be summed up in three key words: integrated, early and often. To meet both project and stakeholders needs, ITD encourages public involvement planning and documentation that meets all three criteria.

Integrated

Public involvement is part of the project planning process, being interdependent and occurring simultaneously. All public involvement is local. Objectives, activities, the level of support and the timing of public involvement are individualized to

address unique characteristics and needs of an affected community. Collaboration among the project manager, team members, public involvement consultants and/or the public involvement coordinator creates the best public involvement results.

Early

The purpose of early involvement is to both educate and receive public input on a developing project. Through early scoping and planning, ITD can develop a public involvement process that will ensure controversy doesn't stop the project or erode public trust. The time and effort spent involving stakeholders early on is returned in public confidence and support.

Often

Public involvement during project planning and development encompasses more than information meetings or public hearings. Opportunities to involve stakeholders by sharing and collecting information can range from one-on-one meetings to attending local city council meetings and should continue throughout the life of a project.

BUILDING TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

Credibility is the single most important component of any public outreach activity. ITD earns public trust when its actions demonstrate that stakeholder input is valued.

Neither ITD nor its consultants should use public involvement and the decision-making process to justify decisions that have already been made. The key to building trust is making relevant information available and accessible and following up on unresolved issues.

- Pay attention to process. *How you do it* is just as important as what you do.
- Explain agency procedures so people know what to expect and how they fit into the process.
- Be forthcoming with information and involve stakeholders from the outset.
- Focus on building trust as well as generating good scientific data.
- Follow up with stakeholders and keep your promises.
- Only promise what you are sure you can deliver.
- Provide plain-language information that meets the specific needs of your audience.
- Get the facts straight and make sure information is logical and complete.
- Coordinate efforts among districts, project managers and any other agencies involved so that communities receive consistent messages and are able to experience competence and good organization.
- Don't send mixed messages. Be sure your actions match your words. To prevent confusion, explain any seeming contradictions in advance, before taking action.
- Enlist the help of other organizations that have credibility with the communities.
- Listen to what various groups are telling you and try to foster respect and consideration among all stakeholders in an issue.
- Avoid closed meetings. They arouse suspicion by implying you have something to hide.

Of course, it's not possible or even necessary for any project to gain universal support or win over all its opponents, but careful planning and thorough public involvement will help communities perceive the decision-making process as fair and will ensure that the broadest possible range of concerns have been addressed.

CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS (CSS) AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

We define Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) as a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in order to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, economic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility.

“Neither ITD nor its consultants should use public involvement and the decision-making process to justify decisions that have already been made.”

Effective public involvement encourages the exploration of issues from a variety of perspectives. Stakeholders must be identified and involved at the beginning of a project and again during the planning, programming, development and construction processes.

The transportation department strives to be a good provider, neighbor, steward and caretaker. Open lines of communication lead to a sense of shared ownership and a common vision. The information collecting and sharing processes begin at the grassroots level, are passed through the Idaho Transportation Department's professional staff, and are conveyed to the Transportation Board. Concerns are addressed. Decisions are made. Action is taken.

For further CSS guidelines and discussion, see the *ITD Context Sensitive Solutions* guide: http://itd.idaho.gov/manuals/Online_Manuals/Design/CSS/CSS_Guide.pdf.

ITD Environmental Ethic

Context Sensitive Solutions recognizes the broad interpretation of “quality of life” in meeting the competing priorities of a diverse community by engaging all interests in the community and emphasizing the importance of finding solutions that preserve environmental values.

ITD has adopted this Environmental Ethic statement to guide its work and accomplish its mission in a manner that employs a Context Sensitive Solutions approach:

The Idaho Transportation Department respects and values the many facets of Idaho's natural and human environment and will protect and enhance those assets while providing high quality, fiscally responsible transportation systems for the citizens of Idaho.

Concern for and awareness of environmental contexts is integrated into everything ITD does. This is not a separate, discrete issue left solely up to the Environmental Section, but rather is woven into the day-to-day work of everyone at ITD as a vital part of our commitment to Context Sensitive Solutions.

The term “environment” as used in this guide includes the natural environment, the built environment, the cultural and social fabric of our communities and the quality of life of the people who live in Idaho.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1970 sets the tone for the federal government's environmental ethic in recognizing the need for systematic, interdisciplinary planning and decision-making that considers environmental factors for major federal actions with the potential to significantly affect the quality of the human environment. It sets a new standard for federal decision-making based on thorough environmental analysis, consideration of alternatives to proposed federal actions and public disclosure and review before action is taken (see References).

ITD is committed to embracing the spirit of NEPA for all transportation activities, regardless of whether they are federally funded. Although non-federal projects will not require federal agency approval, the NEPA process is an excellent framework for ensuring social, economic and environmental factors are considered consistent with the ITD Environ-



mental Ethic. The guiding principles of NEPA have been incorporated into ITD's transportation planning and project development process, as well as maintenance and operations of the state transportation system. It is the responsibility of all ITD employees to recognize and consider these essential principles and to appropriately include them in the transportation decision-making process to assure accountability across the department.

NEPA regulations mandate that transportation decisions involving federal funds and approvals consider environmental as well as technical and economic factors in the assessment and decision-making process. They also require the federal agency to consider all reasonable alternatives – along with their social, economic and environmental impacts -- to their proposed action. Further, NEPA mandates that the public has an opportunity to participate in the process.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations require the environmental process be coordinated into a single effort: compliance with all applicable requirements is to be indicated in the NEPA documentation.

SAFETEA-LU Updates

SAFETEA-LU—"Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users"—took effect in August 2005. SAFETEA-LU introduced changes to the environmental review process along with new requirements for providing opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the development of a project's purpose and need, including exploring a range of alternatives to the project.

For further information, visit: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/index.htm>

DOCUMENTING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Communication is a two-way process that continues to the end of project development when the final decision is shared with stakeholders. All aspects of public involvement should be continually evaluated and documented. These ongoing processes will ensure that the plan can be modified, if necessary, and that decision-makers have sufficient breadth and depth of relevant information to make the best decisions for the project.

A project vision, including purpose and need, must be developed and clearly documented with the involvement of project stakeholders early in the process. This vision should then guide project development decisions. In order to successfully achieve that vision, project team members from project planning, design, right-of-way, construction, maintenance and operations must appreciate the importance of each function and buy in early to the project vision.

Documenting the Process and Results

Public involvement requires conscientious documentation. From informational brochures to ITD's Web site resources to comment sheets and scoping-question data—all of these tools are considered documentation and will contribute to the effectiveness of the public involvement in project development.

Recording the process and the results of the process is also important because that record is often consulted during decision-making. Rejected ideas have a way of resurfacing if they are not accurately recorded and addressed. In addition, decision-makers must know how the public was involved, whether the appropriate stakeholders participated, what the public said, and many other factors that weigh in their decisions. ITD also has legal requirements that must be fulfilled through careful and accurate documentation.

Accurate documentation also enables ITD to learn from successes and failures, allowing project managers and project concept team members to go back and evaluate what was done, what wasn't done and what might have been done better. Successful strategies can be adapted to similar future projects. Ineffective strategies can be examined more carefully: Why did that strategy fail? Could it be modified for

“Rejected ideas have a way of resurfacing if they are not accurately recorded and addressed.”

better effectiveness? This evaluation needs to be ongoing. Project team members can evaluate previous steps at any time and make corrections, if necessary; the documentation is the tool that helps them make those assessments.

Once project development is completed, the department recommends that several documents be included in the resident engineer's file (commonly referred to as "the resident's file"), a file prepared by the project development manager and sent to the construction project manager (See Appendix 2: Documentation Recommendations).



Communicating Decisions to Stakeholders

Though communication between ITD and stakeholders occurs throughout the development of a transportation project, it plays a different role at the end of the development process. At this time, the public is advised of the formal decision made by the department, the Idaho Transportation Board or the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Ongoing documentation will help determine the best means for sharing information about the location, design and construction schedule. If construction information is not available, the department must let people know when it will be available.

The following tactics might be used to inform stakeholders that a decision has been made:

- Send personal letters from the district engineer or the project manager to the stakeholders. Such correspondence should include details, construction schedule and possibly maps.
- Issue a news release, which should also include the details and construction schedule.

Evaluating Strategies and Activities

Through evaluation, ITD can determine the degree to which planned activities provided input and led to effective decisions. For example, after a meeting, a debriefing or recapping session would be helpful in determining whether ITD met its objectives. Such a post-meeting review should honestly consider these questions:

- What did you think about the meeting?
- How did the stakeholders perceive the meeting? (Since community perception will affect the development of the project, it is better to understand their perceptions early.) What type of feedback did the meeting generate from stakeholders?
- Did the meeting accomplish its intended purpose?
- Did the stakeholders understand the purpose of the meeting and respond accordingly?
- Did the audience represent the individuals and groups who were expected to have an interest?

It is also important to evaluate efforts at the end of the development process. Project managers, project-concept team members and the public involvement coordinator should meet as a group to discuss the project, using the Completed Project Evaluation Checklist questions found in Appendix 1.



Chapter 2: Creating a Public Involvement Plan

THE OUTCOME-DRIVEN PROCESS

In order to develop, write and implement an effective Public Involvement Plan, it is important to begin with the end in mind. In other words, identify and articulate exactly what the goals of the project and plan are and what criteria will best measure how well those goals were achieved.

The goal of public involvement is to generate win-win solutions and comments like these:

- “We were involved in identifying the need for the project.”
- “We helped develop the purpose of the project.”
- “We were aware of funding constraints and had input on ways to manage them.”
- “We had a voice in the study and design phases.”
- “We were kept informed during the construction process. There were no surprises.”
- “The completed project reflects our community values and we take pride in knowing we did it together.”
- “We continue to provide input on project maintenance.”
- “We feel ownership in the project and are willing to make it part of our community.”

Thorough scoping helps the project manager ask the questions that are critical to the project’s success. It provides the information necessary to write a public involvement plan that will guide future public involvement activities and schedules. If conducted before a consultant is hired, scoping data help ITD determine which consultant could provide the best public involvement services. It also allows project managers to better analyze a consultant’s scope of work. (See Scoping Questions in Appendix 1)

“Thorough scoping helps the project manager ask the questions that are critical to the project’s success.”

An effective public involvement plan must coordinate with the technical milestones in the planning process or the project development process. Coordination means that a good schedule with well-defined activities is critical.

The public involvement plan is a living document and will change over time as issues and concerns change. For a long process, built-in formal revision dates are a good idea.

STEPS TO AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Identify Stakeholders

Identifying the segments of the public likely to be affected or impacted by a project is the first step and determines the range of public involvement activities needed. Early stakeholder scoping helps:

- Identify potential controversies.
- Gauge levels of interest for various stakeholders.
- Assess available resources.
- Identify social, economic, cultural and environmental concerns.

While stakeholders include owners of property adjacent to the various alignments, they also include users of the project, jurisdictional representatives, transportation service providers, government agencies and interest groups. Stakeholders may support the project or may be likely to oppose it.

A typical list of stakeholders might include:

- Adjacent property owners (residential, commercial, industrial, institutional—education, religious, government, non-profit)
- Adjacent property renters (residential, commercial, industrial, institutional)
- Facility users (commuters, truckers, business customers, major regional employers)

- Local elected and appointed officials (city council, county commissions, planning commissions)
- Resource and regulatory agencies
- Local jurisdiction transportation or technical professionals (public works directors, traffic engineers, planning directors)
- Regional transportation professionals, such as Metropolitan Planning Organization transportation planners
- State transportation professionals (ITD highway designers and corridor planners, traffic engineers, environmental planners)
- Federal transportation professionals (Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration)
- Transportation service providers (transit agencies, airports, marine ports)
- Neighborhood organizations
- Traditionally underserved populations who may be impacted, such as minority groups/leaders, low-income and LEP persons (For complete guidelines, visit <http://itd.idaho.gov/civil/Title6.htm>.)
- Business organizations (local and regional Chambers of Commerce, economic development agencies, industry associations)
- Transportation interest groups (transit, bicycle, pedestrian, highway, aeronautic)
- Native American tribes
- Environmental interest groups
- Historic preservation and scenic conservation groups
- Growth-management interest groups
- Health and wellness interest groups
- The press
- The general public of the project's geographical area

Identifying stakeholders can be a challenge. Knowledge of local customs and local “powers” can sometimes be critical. Strong or influential community leaders may not always be elected or appointed officials. It helps to gather people from within the sponsoring agency who are familiar with the project area and with the transportation needs there. They can provide a place to start in identifying potential issues, the groups likely to be affected by those issues, and the key people in each group.

It is important to recognize that no matter how thoroughly the stakeholder identification activities are conducted at the beginning of a project, the list of stakeholders will change as the project progresses. As more detailed information becomes available, members of the general public who were previously uninterested may become stakeholders.

The effort to engage underserved populations early in the process may include describing why minorities and other groups should be interested in participating, as well as writing documents for the public in easy-to-understand language. The earlier all interested parties can be identified, the better. Because of this, it is a good practice to include mechanisms for outreach to the general public as a continuing element of the overall public involvement plan.

“It is important to recognize that no matter how thoroughly the stakeholder identification activities are conducted at the beginning of a project, the list of stakeholders will change as the project progresses.”

Identify Issues

Stakeholder interviews conducted as part of public involvement scoping/plan development should provide a set of community issues, values and constraints concerning the project. But the results of such interviews may not necessarily provide a complete picture of all community values and interests. An effective public involvement plan includes broad community outreach at an early point in the project to ensure mutual understanding between the agency and the stakeholders of the full set of concerns associated with the project.

In some cases, some of the issues identified are beyond the scope of the current project process. They may need to be referred to other agencies that can take appropriate action, shifted to another planning and development process better suited to addressing them or postponed for consideration at a later stage of project development.

Those identified issues that do pertain to the project at hand should be incorporated into the project definition and documented as input into the evaluation of the project's purpose and need.

Outreach should be focused on understanding community attitudes about the nature of transportation problems or issues associated with the project. Specific concerns about safety, mobility, land use, land development and environmental values are especially important. Individuals or groups may note a concern or issue that might seem irrelevant or trivial, but project managers and agency staff should strive to maintain an open mind and listen to what is being said. Again, issues often will resurface at some future point in the project if left unaddressed.

Typical techniques for broad outreach to stakeholders, for the purpose of issue identification, are described and discussed in Chapter 3.

Establish Objectives

The next step in the planning process is to answer the question: "What do we need to accomplish with the public by the end of the decision-making process?" The answers become objectives that address stakeholder concerns as well as planner or project developer goals and can be achieved through public involvement activities.

Example of an objective: Maintain timely contact with key stakeholders throughout the decision-making process. At a minimum, some type of contact should be maintained no less than every 4 months.

Select Public Involvement Activities

Activities are specific techniques used to achieve public involvement objectives. For the objective mentioned above, "Maintain timely contact with key stakeholders throughout the decision-making process," several activities might be listed:

- Attend/make presentations at city council meetings
- Provide a monthly telephone/email update
- Provide a quarterly project update newsletter

More than one activity can, and usually should, be used to achieve each objective.

DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Developing transportation projects involves considerable investment of department resources. To justify this investment, projects must be demonstrably necessary, cost-effective and within the approved policies of ITD and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Transportation projects are incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which spans several years and reflects priorities established by needs, studies and long-range planning.

STIP

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a staged, multi-year, intermodal program of transportation projects, which is consistent with the statewide transportation plan and contains the transportation improvement programs of the metropolitan planning organizations. In Idaho it is updated annually. For further information, visit: <http://itd.idaho.gov/Projects/stip.htm>.

The determination regarding the level of public involvement is based on criteria taken from the *ITD Design Manual* Section 315 – Project Definitions.

Every project that requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) or the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) requires comprehensive public involvement. A summary of public involvement is required for all environmental documents submitted to the FHWA. The public involvement coordinator will either prepare or assist the project team with the summary.

The table below identifies who is responsible for which public involvement process on complex projects.

Note: The activities in italics may alternatively be performed by a public involvement consultant under district direction. However, it is expected that items distributed to the public will be reviewed by the Office of Communications/public involvement coordinator.

Process	District Project Manager	Public Involvement Coordinator
Scoping	Completes scoping process.	Participates at district's request.
Planning	Prepares a public involvement plan based on public involvement scoping questions (See Appendix 1: Scoping Questions). Submits public involvement plan to public involvement coordinator at the ITD Office of Communications.	At district's request, assists in creating public involvement plan. At district's request, reviews public involvement plan.
Implementing	Manages public involvement process and activities.	At district's request, implements public involvement activities. At district's request, prepares printed materials. Attends and ensures proper documentation of public meetings/hearings.
Documenting	Maintains accurate public involvement files and includes public involvement information in resident's file (see Appendix 2: Documentation Recommendations and Responsibilities).	Maintains accurate public hearing files and hearing documents. Provides hearing summaries.
Concluding	Communicates with project stakeholders about decisions and projected construction dates. Forwards public involvement information to construction manager.	Assists project manager with communicating final decisions to stakeholders.
Evaluating	Conducts a public involvement process evaluation.	Participates in evaluation.

Points to remember:

- Project managers are responsible for the development of public involvement plans for complex projects.
- Project managers are encouraged to include the public involvement coordinator in the public involvement consultant selection process.
- The public involvement coordinator is responsible for reviewing and providing feedback to the project manager regarding the consultant's scope of work and the public involvement plan.
- Project managers can request the public involvement coordinator's participation in projects whether or not a consultant is involved in a project.

TITLE VI CONSIDERATIONS

Overview of Title VI

It is critical that all stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in every public involvement activity. Make arrangements as necessary to accommodate individuals with special needs.

In addition to scheduling events in venues that are ADA compliant, it means addressing the needs of stakeholders whose first language is not English.

Such consideration is a matter of courtesy and effective involvement; it is also required by law. Title VI was enacted as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, stating that:



No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. (42 USC 2000)

The following statement expresses ITD's policy on accessibility and inclusiveness, and must be included verbatim in any published materials ordinarily distributed to the public (see Title VI Statement in Appendix 2):

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. ITD assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any ITD service, program, or activity. The department also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the department will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

Related Statutes

In addition to Title VI, other related statutes provide protection against discrimination on the basis of gender, age or disability by programs receiving federal financial assistance.

Title VI was further defined in 1994. Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations) requires federal agencies and their recipients to identify and address the effects of all programs, policies and activities on minority and low-income populations.

In 2000, Executive Order 13166 (Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency) was signed into law, requiring federal agencies to assess and address the needs of otherwise eligible Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons seeking access to the programs and activities of recipients of federal financial assistance.

ITD's Responsibilities

The following table provides a brief summary of Title VI considerations and ITD's responsibilities. For complete guidelines and further information, visit the ITD Web site at: <http://itd.idaho.gov/civil/Title6.htm>.

Title VI Considerations/ ITD Responsibilities

Statute	Intent	ITD's Responsibilities
1964: Title VI (Section 42 USC 2000)	Prevents discrimination based on race, color, religion or national origin.	Add Title VI Compliance Statement (see Title VI Statement, Appendix 2) to all publicly distributed documents.
1973: Rehabilitation Act (Section 504 29 USC 790)	Protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability.	Venues must be handicapped-accessible throughout. Check primary entrances for widths and ramps, circulation space for sufficient wheelchair access, microphones for adjustability, drinking fountains and restrooms for accessibility, public transit for accessibility, and parking area for access by persons with disabilities. Notices, fact sheets, comment forms, etc. will be made available in alternative formats upon request for those with seeing or hearing impairments. The public is not charged for alternative formats such as large print, audio cassettes or CDs, Braille, amplification systems or sign language interpreters. (http://itd.idaho.gov/civil/Title6.htm)
1973: Federal Aid Highway Act (Section 23 USC 324)	Prevents discrimination based on gender.	Hold events at gender-neutral locations and use gender-neutral language and references in spoken and written communication with stakeholders.
1975: Age Discrimination (42 USC 6101)	Prevents discrimination based on age.	Accommodations for elderly persons with limited mobility or undeveloped computer skills.
1976: FHWA Title VI Regulations (Section 23 CFR Part 200)	Identifies specific actions and attributes to ensure compliance.	Proactively ensure inclusion of and outreach to all stakeholders who might be impacted by a project.
1976: Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898	Mandates fair and equitable treatment of low-income and minority populations.	Identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects. Encourage participation of impacted stakeholders in all phases of decision-making.
2000: Executive Order 13166	Mandates that LEP persons (who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English) have meaningful access to programs and services.	Check Idaho census reports for project-area demographics. State in all outreach documents (brochures, booklets, pamphlets, flyers, Web site, etc.) that language services are available free of charge. Provide or offer to provide interpreter(s). Include notices in local newspapers in languages other than English. Provide notices on non-English language radio and television stations about the availability of language assistance services for important events. (http://itd.idaho.gov/civil/Title6.htm)

WRITING THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Overview

Every transportation project is different and each requires a public involvement plan tailored to its own unique needs and issues. Detailing public involvement goals, objectives, strategies and tools helps ensure that methods for soliciting public input are effective. With up-front planning, mid-stream changes are less likely, meaning that projects are more likely to stay within budget and on schedule.

Flexibility is also critical. Effective public involvement activities should be adaptable so they can evolve as conditions and situations change.

Begin developing a plan by identifying the project's purpose and need, determining the level of public involvement appropriate for the project, and identifying public involvement goals and objectives. Clarity will help identify the best strategy and tactics.

“Effective public involvement activities should be adaptable so they can evolve as conditions and situations change.”

- Complete the scoping questions before you start writing the public involvement plan.
- A plan is required for complex transportation projects and highly recommended, but not required, for all other projects.
- The public involvement coordinator is available for help in completing the public involvement plan.
- Submit the completed plan to the public involvement coordinator and attach a copy to the Location and/or Design Study Report.

Components of the Public Involvement Plan

Project Introduction: The introduction should explain the project as well as provide background information. The introduction also sets the tone for the project's public involvement and may be useful when developing related materials.

Goals and Objectives: Every public involvement plan begins with ITD's goals for public involvement.

- Gather the concerns and needs of the public to be considered during the project's decision making process.
- Use information gathered from the public in developing informed decisions.

The objectives should be derived from the specific circumstances of the project. The more specific they are, the better, as objectives provide justification for all other activities included in this plan.

Project Stakeholders: This section of the public involvement plan should answer two questions:

- Who might be interested in participating?
- Whose participation is necessary for the department to make sound decisions?

Next, identify the best channels of communication with stakeholders and what information these stakeholders need about the project.

Project Strategy: Outline the general approach and public involvement processes for achieving the project's goals and objectives.

Tools and Techniques: Before writing this section, review what has worked well for prior projects and has led to the greatest success. Understanding the project and the level of public interest will help you select the most appropriate tools and techniques for engaging stakeholders.

Many examples of public involvement tools and techniques are discussed in Chapter 3.

Resources: Specify the resources (both time and money) necessary to implement the project's public involvement activi-

ties. It is important to know the cost of your tools and techniques in order to determine whether available resources are adequate or alternatives need to be found.

Project Schedule: Identifying project milestones helps determine which particular public involvement activities are appropriate when. Key activities should be integrated into the project's critical path method (CPM).

Management: This section of the public involvement plan identifies the chain of communication as well as the roles and responsibilities between headquarters, Office of Communications, the district and any public involvement consultants. This section is especially important if a consultant is implementing public involvement activities.

Evaluation: Evaluation should occur throughout the project. This section of the plan should outline methods and measurements for evaluating whether the strategies, tools and techniques are meeting public involvement goals and objectives for the project.

See the example public involvement plan in Appendix 1.



Chapter 3: Implementing Public Involvement

THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLBOX

Think of the techniques described in this chapter as a toolbox of options. As a starting point, the tools have been organized and divided into three compartments according to how they might be used: written communication, small group communication and large group communication. Some techniques overlap, and many of them fit into more than one of the three categories or fit into different categories at different times.

No two projects are exactly alike, and public involvement tools and techniques should be tailored to reflect the particular character of each project: its group of stakeholders, its geographic location, the successes and failures of previous public outreach programs, the level of complexity and controversy and so on.

Even cultural differences in stakeholder groups make a difference in identifying effective techniques. For example, reliance solely on Web sites or e-mail lists for disseminating project information may not be effective in reaching lower-income groups or certain other segments of the population. In another example, agencies working in Alaska have noted that some native tribes prefer and react better to formal presentations from government officials than open-house formats. The key, of course, is to understand the local contexts and differences and tailor an approach that works for the stakeholders.

Techniques are also likely to differ from one decision point to another within any project because the nature of the required information exchange is different. At the beginning of the process, the project team usually works to discover community issues and gain a better understanding of the project need, but may have relatively little detailed or substantive information to share with the community. Later in the process, the agency is seeking feedback on particular alternatives and may need opportunities to present a large amount of detailed information.

In selecting the right technique for the right situation, look at what has been used before, consider the needs and perspective of your audience and review the logistics to be sure what you're planning is realistic and workable.

Keep in mind that it's not so much the tool or technique that determines success, but rather why we choose it, how we implement it and what behavior and attitude we model during the process that makes the difference.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

The goal of public outreach is to promote awareness by letting people know a transportation project is being considered and to explain opportunities for their comments and participation. Public outreach is an ongoing part of the process, as stakeholders must be kept informed about a project's progress, final decisions and construction schedules. Written communication techniques include but are not limited to:

- Fact sheets and flyers
- Brochures and newsletters
- Project Web site
- News or press releases
- Stakeholder letters
- Legal notices
- Newspaper advertising

Guidelines for Written Materials

All printed and on-line materials need to adhere to consistent standards and must have a similar look and feel throughout the project; these must follow ITD guidelines as described below.

Use the *ITD Style and Communications Guide* and the *Associated Press Stylebook* as general references.

Logos

The ITD logo must appear on all printed materials. If a project logo has been developed, it should be used in addition to the ITD logo to increase project awareness and identity.

Logos of partnering firms, consultants or vendors should not appear on print materials intended for the public.

Policy Statements

ITD's Title VI Policy Statement should appear on all documents distributed to the public (ref: <http://itd.idaho.gov/civil/>):

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. ITD assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any ITD service, program, or activity. The department also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the department will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

Following is a statement to be used if demographic data show there may be stakeholders who would benefit from Spanish interpretation. (Contact the public involvement coordinator for translation to other languages):

Se les recomienda a las personas que necesiten un intérprete ó arreglos especiales que llamen a la coordinadora de participación publica, al 208-334-4444 ó TDD/TDY 208-334-4458.

(Persons needing an interpreter or special accommodations are urged to contact the Public Involvement Coordinator at 208-334-4444 or TDD/TDY 208-334-4458.)

Environmental Ethic

If appropriate to the context, ITD's Environmental Ethic may appear in stakeholder materials:

The Idaho Transportation Department respects and values the many facets of Idaho's natural and human environment and will protect and enhance those assets while providing high-quality, fiscally-responsible transportation systems for the citizens of Idaho.

Brochures, Newsletters, Postcards, Fact Sheets and Stakeholder Letters

Although the names for written communication with stakeholders are often used interchangeably, there are consistent guidelines for all of the tools. They should be:

- Inviting, easy to read (Strive for 7th-grade reading level achieved by using words of fewer than 3 syllables, sentences with 15 – 20 words and paragraphs of 3 - 5 sentences.)
- Free of jargon (does someone from another generation, region or culture understand what you are saying?)
- Conversational in tone
- A means of regular communication (Goal: some form of communication every 4 - 6 months during a project.)

(Note: examples of the following can be found in Appendix 1)

A **brochure** is often written to last the life of the project. It introduces the project, gives its background, tells how the public can provide input and how the input will be used, provides a project time line and gives contact names. Brochures are often distributed at public meetings and mailed to stakeholders and the media in response to questions.

A **newsletter**, often a two-sided 8.5" x 11" piece, is used to provide project updates. For example, after a project milestone – a public meeting perhaps – a newsletter might be sent to summarize what was learned and how the information will be used. An upcoming public event might be announced through a newsletter.

Postcards can be used as invitations to public meetings or other events or to provide a brief project update.

A **fact sheet** is useful as a handout or take-way for stakeholder events, as an insert in a mailing, as a ready reference for media interviews and to provide talking points during conversations with stakeholders. A fact sheet is generally written in a bulleted format.

Stakeholder letters are used to communicate with people on an identified mailing list. They are more personal and often have a better chance of being read than a more impersonal brochure or newsletter. Letters are used in highway projects to ask for permission to enter property for survey or right-of-way processes. In the hearing process, letters are used to announce to property owners and agencies the availability of an environmental document for review.

Make sure your brochure, newsletter, fact sheet or personal letter does the following:

- Answers the questions who, what, why, when, where and how
- Names a contact person, along with corresponding phone, fax and email information
- Provides the Web site address where additional information can be found
- Contains ITD's logo
- Contains Title VI information
- Reflects contact information for special accommodations including language interpretation (brochure, newsletter or postcard)

Distribution: Brochures, newsletters, postcards and letters may be mailed to an identified stakeholder list, which includes agencies and local elected officials. "Postal route drops" or "direct mailing" are often used to communicate with stakeholders in specific geographic areas.

Remember: Provide at least 30 copies of mailed materials to the public involvement coordinator for distribution in the headquarters complex.

Legal Notices/Notice of Availability

Legal notices are used to invite input on a proposed action. The notice is placed in the newspaper of record for the geographic area as well as any other newspapers that serve the affected stakeholders.

A legal notice may be placed in the "legals" section of the newspaper or it can be developed as a "display ad" and placed in any section. The important thing to note is that where a legal notice is required, a certification of publication is also required. Legal notices relating to the NEPA process are coordinated with the public involvement coordinator.

See Appendix 1 for examples of a legal notice written for the "legals" section of the newspaper and one developed as a display ad.

Newspapers of Record

District 1:

Coeur d'Alene Press

201 Second

Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Phone: 208-664-8176

District 2:
Lewiston Morning Tribune
 PO Box 957
 505 C. Street
 Lewiston, ID 83501
 Phone: 208-746-1185

District 3:
Idaho Statesman
 PO Box 40
 Boise, ID 83707
 Phone: 208-377-6400

District 4:
The Times-News
 132 Fairfield Street W.
 PO Box 548
 Twin Falls, ID 83303-0548
 Phone: 208-734-9667

District 5:
Idaho State Journal
 PO Box 431
 205 S. Arthur
 Pocatello, ID 83204
 Phone: 208-232-4161

District 6:
Post Register
 PO Box 1800
 3333 Northgate Mile
 Idaho Falls ID 83403
 Phone: 208-542-6777

Specific Stakeholder Newspapers

Idaho's Spanish-language newspaper:
Idaho Unido
 201 South 10th Ave.
 Pocatello, ID 83201
 Phone: 208-233-4994

Newspaper for Idaho's Native American tribes:
Sho-Ban News
 PO Box 900
 HRDC Bldg.-Pina Drive
 Fort Hall, ID 83203
 Phone: 208-478-3887

Project Web Page

Description

ITD posts Web pages for all active transportation projects in Idaho in the “Projects” section of the department’s Web site. This spares the project manager the time, energy and expense of building new Web sites from scratch for each project and provides a consistent access point for the public.

Purpose

Project Web pages provide stakeholders with information about each project, including progress updates and ongoing public involvement activities. Through on-line comment forms and direct links to the project manager’s e-mail, it also offers opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the planning process by providing input or asking questions.

Because the public involvement coordinator manages the upload process, the content, look and feel are consistent from project to project, and therefore easy for stakeholders to navigate.

How it Works

The public involvement coordinator posts the content written and supplied by the project manager. For an example, see: <http://itd.idaho.gov/projects/>. Choose a district on the map and a project from the list.

Project Web pages are organized into the following elements, with content supplied by the project manager:

- Project name (e.g. US 95 to Homedale)
- Photo
- Key number
- Project number
- Description of the project (from the project concept report)
- What has happened so far
- What is happening now
- What’s next
- Contacts

All users of the ITD Web site assume that the information posted there is correct and up-to-date. It is important to make sure that any new, relevant information about the project is supplied by the project manager for posting as it becomes available.

Who Takes the Lead

The project manager is responsible for writing the content by summarizing information from the concept report, then sending it to the public involvement coordinator as a Microsoft Word document along with a project area map or photo in JPEG or TIFF format. The public involvement coordinator populates a new project page with the content provided.

The project manager continues to send updates on the project status, announcements and other aspects to the public involvement coordinator throughout the life of the project. The public involvement coordinator forwards incoming stakeholder comments, questions or other input submitted through the Web site to the project manager.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC VIA THE MEDIA

Inside every public involvement program is a good public information program. Before people can participate, they need the background to be able to participate in an informed manner. In particular, they need to know how a decision could affect them and their interests.

It is important to be as objective as possible. You may never convince advocacy groups that your material is objective, since some have a stake in being critical. The target therefore is the mainstream public, and the goal is to ensure that people who do not have a predetermined position perceive the information they receive from ITD as being useful and trustworthy.

Following are the most frequently used techniques for providing information to the general public.

News Releases

A news release, also called a press release, is typically one to two pages in length and makes an announcement about an upcoming event or discusses a decision that has been made. Occasionally a news release shows up in a newspaper or on the air just the way you wrote it. But more often, it is used to convince an editor to do a story, and the reporter assigned to the story will contact you for follow-up information.

The raw content for news releases comes from the project manager. The Office of Communications reviews all news releases and upon finalization sends them to the media. (For an example, see News Release in Appendix 1.)

Media Kits

One way to help reporters cover an event is to prepare a media kit providing a summary of the key information they might need throughout the decision-making process. Typically a media kit consists of a folder with pockets that contain short summaries of the project need, the decision-making process, frequently asked questions, summaries of key technical studies or environmental documents and other relevant information. It's generally helpful to include copies of past brochures or newsletters and photos of the project area.

“Inside every public involvement program is a good public information program.”

Identify the reporters/editors you believe will be interested in the story and arrange to stop by, deliver the media kit and answer questions on the spot. It is good practice to take copies of the media kit with you to a public meeting to help reporters who may drop in.

Paid Advertising: Newspaper Display Ads and Radio/TV Ads

Paid advertisements are one sure way to make an announcement or present information to the public in newspapers or on radio or television. The chief advantage over news releases is that paid ads give you control of what is said and when it will run.

Paid advertisements are expensive. However, the public normally appreciates advertisements announcing public meetings, particularly if they are visually attractive and provide information people need to participate in a decision-making process.

Who Takes the Lead

The program or project manager provides information to the Office of Communications, which will assist with formatting and advertising placement.

SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs)
- Focus Groups
- Workshops

As you convene any stakeholder event or collaborative activity, be clear about:

- What participants can expect
- The level and methods of stakeholder participation
- What participants can influence
- What participants cannot influence
- Decision-maker assumptions about the issues

Stakeholder Interviews

Description

One-on-one interviews with selected sets of potential stakeholders can be done in person or by telephone. The number of interviews necessary will vary widely by project. Narrow down the list of potential stakeholders identified during the scoping process and make sure to include representatives from the full range of people affected by the project. Include the opposition as well as potential supporters, facility users and so on. Project sponsors often think they know all the positive aspects of a project, but it is easy to miss a particular stakeholder perspective. It is just as important to learn why people may favor a proposed action as why they may oppose it.

“The point here is to base public involvement planning on actual consultation with stakeholders, not to speculate on their attitudes.”

Interviews generally begin with a brief overview of the transportation need that is prompting the project development activity, and proceed to questions concerning perceived issues and concerns, level of interest, ways the individual or group want to be included in the process, appropriate techniques for information exchange, key sources used for obtaining information about community activities and other individuals or groups who may be interested in the project.

Purpose

These interviews result in an improved understanding of stakeholder issues and characteristics, provide ideas for appropriate public involvement techniques, and build agency credibility. People love to be listened to and respect the agency for taking the time and trouble to do so. The point here is to base public involvement planning on actual consultation with stakeholders, not to speculate on their attitudes.

Personal interviews also have the advantage of placing staff locally in the project area, giving them an opportunity to get a sense of place and how the community functions. A project manager expressed it well: “In an ideal world, an engineer or project manager should have to live in a community for at least one week before working on a project there.”

Interview Techniques

Make an appointment with the stakeholder. If possible, visit in their home or office. It is preferable to take two people to the interview so that one can take notes while the other asks questions. Make a duplicate copy of your questions for the stakeholder; include a brief project overview. Limit the number of questions and take notes on your copy as the stakeholder speaks.

Sample Questions

- What is your interest in the project? Are you a property or business owner? Interested citizen? Commuter? Other?
- What praises and concerns do you have about the project?
- How do these issues affect you personally and/or the organization you represent?
- What environmental issues should ITD know about? Historic sites? Plant or animal species? Other?
- How would you like to be involved? Citizens advisory committee? Attend meetings? Read updates?
- Who else should we be talking with about this project (any other affected groups, organization that represents them, appropriate contacts, etc.)?
- How would you or your group like to receive information about this project? US mail? E-mail? Phone? Other?
- What is your contact information (name, address, phone number, e-mail address)?

Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs)

Description

A citizen's advisory committee (CAC) is a representative group of stakeholders that meets regularly to discuss issues of common concern. Because it can be used either alone or in conjunction with other techniques, an advisory committee is widely used to achieve a basic level of citizen input to transportation planning and development.

An advisory committee has these basic features:

- Stakeholder groups from throughout the project region are represented. Stakeholders are given opportunities to volunteer to participate.
- Advisory group meetings are “public” in the sense that they are “announced” and anyone can attend. At the same time, some advisory group members are invited because of their expertise.
- Meetings are held regularly.
- Comments and points of view of participants are recorded and may be posted to the project Web site. Consensus on issues is sought but not required.
- An advisory committee is assigned an important role in the project planning process.

Purpose

An advisory committee is a forum for hearing citizens’ ideas. It is a place where agencies can present goals and proposed programs and where citizens can become educated on technical issues. It gives a better understanding of agency milestones. Its members feel freer to ask agencies for assistance, for clarification of points and for follow-up on questions. It provides a continuing forum for bringing citizens’ ideas directly into the process and an opportunity for stakeholders to participate.

Special efforts should be made to include representatives of disabled, minority, lower economic classes and limited English proficiency (LEP) groups.

How it Works

Advisory committees are managed by the ITD project manager (with assistance from consultants if applicable). The public involvement coordinator is also available to help with set-up and facilitation.

A typical advisory committee agenda would cover the following items:

- Introductions, if attendees vary each time
- Welcome to newcomers
- Discussion of agenda, seeking potential changes
- Discussion of items on agenda in order, unless change is requested
- Presentation of information as necessary for clarification
- Opportunity for comment/feedback

Who Participates

Members must be self-selected to avoid perception of bias or excessive agency control of the outcome. However, it is important for ITD to be represented on the committee to foster communication and collaboration between stakeholders and government, and to make sure the proceedings are documented.

Selection is a two-step process:

1. ITD carefully identifies all stakeholders, including the general public, and invites participation in the advisory committee.
2. The public then self-selects advisory committee membership; that is, those who are interested attend.

If membership is not fully representative, the agency might encourage unrepresented or underrepresented groups to attend or provide their input in some other way.

Costs

An advisory committee requires support staff within an agency, and the work required can be substantial. Meeting minutes must be kept and may be posted to the project Web site. Background information, past minutes and agendas must be sent out before meetings. A site for the meeting must be selected. Agency representatives must attend to provide resources for advisory committee questions and response preparation.

Benefits

An advisory committee helps monitor stakeholder reactions to the project’s concept, proposals and progress. By

participating, ITD learns of opinions and stances at an early point in the process and can work to prevent stand-offs or escalating misperceptions. Working with the advisory committee, an agency can craft meaningful context sensitive solutions in a relatively short period of time.

An advisory committee demonstrates ITD's commitment to public involvement. It helps find common ground for consensus about a solution. If consensus cannot be reached, an advisory committee provides a forum for identifying positions, exploring them in depth and reporting the divergences of opinion to the agencies.

An advisory committee is flexible. It can be part of regional or state planning or be formed exclusively for a single project. An advisory committee should consider the special issues of Americans with disabilities, minority populations, various economic classes and LEP persons.

An advisory committee may provide previously undiscovered data or perspectives, such as an in-progress intent to add a site to the historic register.

Other Key Points

An established advisory committee is the basis for many techniques of public involvement, some of which (facilitation, brainstorming, visioning, etc.) can take place within CAC meetings. Video can be used to illustrate specific points.

Reference

AASHTO Practitioner's Handbook: Utilizing Community Advisory Committees for NEPA Studies, December 2006.

Focus Groups

Description

A focus group is a tool to gauge public opinion. Borrowed from the marketing and advertising industry, it scientifically regards transportation as a product that can be improved and the public as customers for that product. It is a way to identify customer concerns, needs, wants and expectations. It can inform sponsors of the attitudes and values that customers hold and why. It can help drive development of policies, programs and services and the allocation of resources. For example, focus groups have been used as a way to determine public opinions on HOV lane additions and transit alternatives.

“A focus group is a place for people to speak out without fear of criticism. The small size of the group lowers barriers to speaking out.”

A focus group is a discussion with professional leadership. It is a meeting of a carefully selected group of individuals convened to discuss and give opinions on a single topic. Participants in a focus group are selected in two ways: random selection is used to assure representation of all segments of society; non-random selection helps elicit a particular position or point of view. A combination of selection techniques could result in a focus group of people well-versed in transportation issues as well as those who are solely consumers of transportation services.

A focus group has these basic features:

- A carefully crafted and facilitated agenda, with five or six major questions at most
- Emphasis on gathering perspectives, insights and opinions of participants through conversation and interaction
- Identification of major points of both agreement and divergence of opinion
- Minimal presentation of material so as to avoid preconceptions about context and subject
- Gleaning, not shaping, opinions or perspectives
- Eight to twelve participants
- Understanding that the participants' role is to give personal insights and perspectives

Informality encourages full participation. A focus group is a place for people to speak out without fear of criticism. The small size of the group lowers barriers to speaking out. Further, participants are not required or even encouraged to prepare for the discussion, since spontaneity in responding produces fresh information.

Purpose

A focus group provides citizen input from otherwise unrepresented individuals. Residents from specific areas within an urban region can be heard. Focus groups can also compare opinions that are internal and external to an organization.

Who Participates

Focus group members are selected by the sponsor. Depending on the goals to be achieved, a focus group can be heterogeneous (with a variety of people from different backgrounds within a single geographic area) or homogeneous (with separate focus sub-groups for residents, businesses and institutions). Members may be randomly selected or invited from previously identified non-random groups.

Citizens participate by stating opinions. Individuals within the group may react to others' opinions or bring up their own ideas. The facilitator of the group will guide discussion to cover all agenda items and assure that all individuals get a chance to speak.

Focus group information supplements other citizen input. A purpose for the group should be clearly identified beforehand. Its agenda should fit closely within the information needs of a larger project or program. Opinions derived from the group should inform the larger effort.

A focus group is tailored to assess public reactions. Because it typically deals with broad policy or program goals and impacts on the community, it does not dwell on technical issues. Instead, it helps agencies or organizations understand overall public reactions to programs or policies at a single point in time.

Who Takes the Lead

A focus group needs a facilitator as leader. The facilitator is essential to hold the group to the agenda and to elicit opinions from each participant. In some cases, the facilitator can keep a single participant from dominating the proceedings of the group. In other instances, opinions may be lost in a sea of anecdotes unless the facilitator steps in to focus and clarify the discussion.

The facilitator needs guidance on the agenda and purpose of the focus group. Sample questions for the group can be provided to the facilitator beforehand. Additionally, the sponsor may want to be present at the group in a non-participatory function or as an outside observer. During a break in the discussion, the sponsor may confer with the facilitator to assure that all agenda topics are being covered.

Workshops

Description

A workshop is a meeting to resolve a problem or issue. Within a specified time limit, participants work together intensely to reach a resolution. The sponsoring agency usually sets the goals and time limit and announces them ahead of time. The workshop leader's responsibility is to bring out all points of view from concerned citizens as well as agency representatives and other experts.

Here are the typical components of a workshop:

- Definition of issues to be resolved
- Analysis of the problem and alternative approaches to solutions
- Assignment of small groups to clarify issues
- Use of staff to find supporting data
- Development of proposals to respond to issues
- Development of alternative suggested solutions
- Presentation and analysis of final proposal(s)
- Consensus and final resolution of approach to be taken

A workshop is problem-oriented. The breadth of background of participants will assure full discussion of issues, inter-relationships and impacts. Time limits challenge people to rapidly, openly and honestly examine the problem and help potential adversaries reach consensus on an appropriate solution.

A workshop produces visible results. It is often used early in a planning process to provide useful ideas and perspectives from concerned interest groups. In mid-process, it can help resolve sticky issues. Late in the process, it is useful in resolving an impasse between groups.

Purpose

A workshop calls attention to an issue. It can dramatize:

- The need for public attention to resolve an issue
- A deliberately participatory problem-solving process
- A public agency's openness to suggestions
- A search for all possible approaches to a question
- A democratically derived consensus

A workshop can generate alternative solutions to a problem. The setting encourages openness and creativity. All suggestions from the group—however outrageous—should be examined to encourage thinking about better approaches.

Who Participates

Any citizen can participate in a workshop. A wide range of people with differing interests should attend. Typically, participants represent organized groups, but individuals with any stake in the issue should be encouraged to attend.

“Meetings should only be one component of a more comprehensive public involvement program.”

How citizens participate depends on the workshop leader. An experienced leader assures that a range of views will be heard, inviting citizens to take a stance and present their points of view. All participants are assured an opportunity to speak out, as the leader encourages even the most reticent participant to speak up without fear of rebuke or ridicule. The open, free-wheeling workshop format encourages enthusiasm and responses.

Who Takes the Lead

A leader experienced in workshop techniques is a must. To avoid chaos, a high level of discipline is required. The workshop leader should be familiar with group dynamics and the substantive issues the group will face. The leader tailors the setting, background materials and issues to the goal of the workshop and elicits participation from all group members within the allotted time. One or two staff people should be available for support to the leader and to supply data and information.

A workshop involves significant resources. The chief issues are sufficient space, appropriate background materials and an experienced leader. Graphics must be used so that participants can quickly comprehend the problem and envision alternative solutions. Background materials must be available at the start of the workshop so that no time is lost in investigating the problem. If the preparatory work leading to a workshop is done in-house, it can be time-consuming. However, if done by a specialist, it can be expensive.

Timing

A minimum of two hours is essential for a workshop focused on a modest problem. However, many workshops are day-long events.

A workshop can occur at any time in the planning process, but preparation is crucial. Advance work can take a month or more, depending on the issue to be discussed. Workshop materials are flexible and should be tailored to the focus of the meeting.

LARGE GROUP COMMUNICATION

Public Meetings and Hearings

Meetings—formal and informal—are the backbone of a public participation program. People like and need firsthand opportunities to discuss agency programs and plans. However, a very small percentage of the public attends public meetings, so such meetings should be only one component of a more comprehensive public involvement program.

Relevant policies:

BOARD POLICY B-13-02 – Public Involvement for Location and Design Determinations (see Appendix 2)

BOARD POLICY B-20-03 – Public Hearings (See Appendix 2)

Overview

Meetings provide a time and place for face-to-face contact and two-way communication—dynamic components of public involvement that help break down barriers between people and the agencies that serve them. Through meetings, people learn that an agency is not a faceless, uncaring bureaucracy and that the individuals in charge are real people. Meetings give agencies a chance to respond directly to comments and dispel rumors or misinformation.

Far from being passive gatherings, meetings are interactive occasions where people discuss issues of consequence to themselves and their neighbors, listen to opposing viewpoints on the issues and work together for the common good. Agency staff people who handle public meetings need to be trained in skills that encourage interaction while keeping the process focused and productive.

Options in organizing meetings

The particular circumstances of a plan or project determine the type of meeting that is appropriate, when it is held, the way it is organized and how it is conducted. Most meetings work best when they are adapted to a specific purpose—for instance, for stakeholders in a proposed project or plan to monitor its progress and effects, or for an agency to build consensus and support. Because they demand time and effort from all participants, meetings must be planned and implemented carefully.

Determining the type of meeting

The type of meeting, its timing and its level of formality are determined by its purpose in the overall public involvement effort. An effective strategy tailors meetings to the target audience, the corridor or region or the types of stakeholder groups—and, in some instances such as public hearings, to the legal requirements.

Scheduling for a meeting depends on what information participants need and when they are likely to need it, as well as on when agencies need information from the public. Sometimes a series of meetings is appropriate:

- A kickoff session;
- Periodic meetings throughout the process, especially timed with major planning milestones and decision points; and
- A meeting or meetings near the end of the process.

The underlying principle is to provide timely and adequate opportunities for participation. Flexibility is crucial. Agencies may vary meeting types to grab attention or focus on specific elements of a plan or program. Near the completion of a process, if an agency is legally required to hold a public hearing, it may choose to prepare potential participants with further informational gatherings and discussions. In cases where time is insufficient, agencies might schedule another date when discussion can continue.

How do meetings and hearings differ?

Public meetings present information to the public and obtain informal input from community residents. Held throughout the planning process, they are tailored to specific issues or community groups and are either informal or formal. Public meetings have been used for many years to disseminate information, provide a setting for public discussion and get feedback from the community.

A public hearing is a more formal event than a public meeting. Held prior to a decision point, a public hearing gathers community comments and positions from all interested parties for public record and input into decisions. Public hearings are required by the federal government for many transportation projects and take place during transportation planning. Public notices in a general circulation newspaper cite the time, date and place of a hearing. The period between notice and hearing dates provides time for preparing comments for submission to an agency. During this period, the agency accepts questions and provides clarification.

(See Appendix 1 for examples of display ads and legal notices for public hearings and meetings)

Public meetings or hearings can be conducted in an “open house” format.

Presentations, slide shows and one-on-one discussions continue throughout the event. Exhibits are laid out as a series of stations: a reception area; a presentation area for slide shows or short talks; areas for one-on-one discussions between community people and agency staff members; and displays of background information, activities to date, work flow, anticipated next steps and an array of primary subject displays.

An open house meeting/hearing has no set, formal agenda. Unlike a meeting, no formal discussions or presentations take place, and there is no audience seating. Instead, people get information informally from exhibits, hand-outs and staff and are encouraged to give opinions, comments and preferences to staff either orally or in writing.

Open house meetings and hearings have the following common characteristics:

- Information is presented buffet-style, and participants shop for information, including graphics, maps, photos, models, videos or related documents. Space is allocated for tables or booths, and information is mounted on walls.
- Agencies reserve table space for comment sheets where people write their opinions. Participants turn in comment sheets at the time or mail them in later. Pre-paying postage for comment sheets increases the likelihood they will be returned.
- Agency or technical staff people are present to answer questions or provide details. Often at least one person staffs each table, but agency representatives also are positioned at displays or roam throughout the room.
- These events can be used for either a planning process or project development.
- Since there is no fixed agenda, these events are usually scheduled for substantial portions of a day or evening, so that people can drop in at their convenience and fully participate. Hours should be clearly set and well publicized. In areas where people work in shifts, open houses/hearings can be scheduled to overlap the shift changes.
- Brochures or videos introduce the open house process.
- Agencies usually provide take-home written materials, brochures or maps.
- These events can include non-agency displays. Sister agencies and community proponents or opponents may be given space to present a point of view via displays, documents or handouts in separate, visible areas. Some agencies have found that allowing public groups to set up tables outside the meeting or hearing room helps the public distinguish official agency information from other sources.

When is a hearing needed on a highway project?

The District Engineer may waive public hearings when public awareness and support for the project is apparent and non-controversial. If there is a question as to whether a hearing is needed, the District Engineer shall request in writing that the Roadway Design Engineer determine whether a hearing will be held, based on the following criteria and the results of the public information meetings.

Projects involving federal funds must have a hearing, or an opportunity for hearing, when the project involves:

- Acquisition of significant amounts of right-of-way
- Substantial change to the layout or function of the connecting roadways or of the facilities being improved
- Significant adverse impact on abutting property or when litigation or public controversy is anticipated
- Significant social, economic and/or environmental effect on the surrounding area

Projects financed totally with state funds must have a public hearing when:

- The state highway serving or traversing any city is to be abandoned, relocated or replaced
- There is significant public interest or controversy surrounding the project

FHWA may request a public hearing when a hearing may be in the public interest.

Reference: *ITD Design Manual 375.04*

A single meeting can address several related projects or community planning issues. This is more efficient for agencies, in terms of both staff time and mailing costs, and it helps avoid participant burnout, particularly when many of the same people are interested in several projects or plans. Joint meetings also help to place individual project issues and goals within a broader community context.

How do agencies use the output?

Meetings and hearings help monitor community reactions to agency policy, proposals and progress. By observing reactions at periodic meetings or at a hearing, agencies and people are made aware of opinions and stances. If public meetings are held early in the process, these opinions may be analyzed and responded to before they become solidified or difficult to modify. Public hearings provide formal input to decisions.

What are the costs and other logistical concerns?

Resource and staff needs can be substantial, depending on the type of meeting. Information meetings are staffed with professionals who can answer questions and determine the concerns of those who attend.

An agency organizes a public meeting or hearing and prepares pre-meeting materials, including meeting announcements and agendas, displays, audio-visual materials and any mailings or publicity that are necessary. The public should be made aware of the free access to these materials.

Agencies consider transit access and the needs of people with disabilities in selecting a convenient place and time.

Meetings and hearings may have ground rules. These typically would include:

- Recognizing the legitimacy of others' concerns
- Accepting responsibility for coming to a meeting prepared for discussion
- Listening carefully and sharing discussion time with others
- Encouraging everyone to participate
- Discussing with intent to identify areas of agreement, clarify differences and search for common understanding
- Establishing each speaker's time limit

For a public meeting, an agency provides summaries in written form, describing areas of agreement and disagreement. All points of view must be clearly and fairly stated. For a public hearing, a hearing transcript is formally prepared, based on a stenographic record or tape.



Meeting/Hearing Timelines

ITD strongly recommends that public meetings follow a similar notification and planning schedule to that required for public hearings. The following table shows who is responsible for doing what, and the number of days in advance of the hearing the listed activity should be completed.

A complex transportation project will typically have a public involvement consultant (CONS) on the project team. In this case, some of the activities assigned to the public involvement coordinator (PIC) may alternatively be performed by the CONS and then reviewed by the PIC.

Glossary of Personnel Abbreviations and Terminology			
CE	Chief Engineer	PDE	Project Design Engineer
CONS	Public Involvement Consultant	PIC	Public Involvement Coordinator
DE	District Engineer	RD	Headquarters Roadway Design Section
District	District Engineer, Assistant District Engineer, and District personnel including Project Development Engineer, Project Engineer, Traffic Engineer, Right-of-Way Supervisor, Traffic Engineer, Environmental Planner	R/W	Right-of-Way Manager
HO	Hearing Officer	SB	Secretary, Idaho Transportation Board
OC	Office of Communications	Team	District personnel, Public Involvement Coordinator, Headquarters Environmental Personnel and Office of Communications
OTIS	Office of Transportation Investment Supervisor		

Public Hearing Timeline: Complex Project

(It is recommended that meetings follow the same timeline as hearings).

****Note: Highlighted activities are those that involve communication with the public.**

# Days Ahead	Activity	Who Does It	Consultant May Do It Instead
70	Submit environmental documentation to ENV for approval prior to beginning of hearing process	District	
70	Submit request to RD for hearing requirement determination (if question exists as to whether or not a hearing is needed).	District	
70	Submit project hearing plans to RD for approval.	District	
65	Make determination on hearing requirement and advise District and PIC.	RD	
65	Notify PIC when plans are approved and return approved plans to District.	RD	
65	Send copy of environmental document to PIC for file.	District	
65	Call PIC to schedule hearing date.	District	
65	Inform SB and ASHD to advise appropriate Board member of hearing date.	PIC	
60	Meet to outline organization of hearing. Define scope of hearing and make initial assignments for support materials, presentation, Q&A and team leader.	Team	
60	Make assignments for following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General administration • Local government concerns • Participation by other political entities • Illustrations and exhibits • Event site coordination • Video and still photographs • Property owner contacts and R/W issues • Publications (written project overview) • Publicity • Event script for each presenter 	Team DE DE DE/PIC PDE/PIC PDE/PIC OC/PIC R/W PIC CONS PIC/OC Each	 CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS
60	If system action, advise	OTIS & PIC.	RD
60	Identify Work Authority: Activity code: Functional code: Rule:	PIC	

# Days Ahead	Activity	Who Does It	Consultant May Do It Instead
60	Identify hearing location: (Must be handicapped-accessible and approximately 2,800 sq. ft. Please note that the best hearing location is one with all facilities included—sign-in area, main hall, separate video and testimony areas, break room for staff.) Identify hearing hours:	District/ PIC	CONS
60	Submit project information to PIC. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reason for project • Type • Alternatives • Length • Estimated cost • Construction year • Environmental impacts • Public concerns • R/W properties affected • Map of project location suitable for reproduction • Location where project information/plans can be obtained • Contact person and phone number 	District	
60	Decide who will be the primary contact person for each area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: • Right-of-way: • Environment: • Traffic: • Alternates: 	DE	
60	Lay out all creative concepts for advance publicity; e.g., paid advertising, radio spots, news releases, etc. Identify newspapers and other media to be contacted.	PIC	CONS
60	Secure hearing officer.	PIC	
55	Contact property owners again to personally advise them of upcoming hearing date, time and location, plus impact on individual property.	District & R/W	
55	Draft script to be used for video, project brochure, advertisements, news releases, etc. Send copy to team. Comments due to PIC by Day 52.	PIC	CONS
50	Make any necessary corrections to script and send copy to team. Script should include shot list for still photographs and video.	PIC	CONS
45	Develop copy for all print/paid ads. Schedule dates for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ads • News releases • Public Notice • Interviews 	PIC	CONS

# Days Ahead	Activity	Who Does It	Consultant May Do It Instead
45	Make telephone inquiries of local officials to determine public interest in project as well as public concerns. Assess property owner concerns. Determine if notification needs to be translated into another language and notify PIC.	District	
45	Scriptwriter, videographer and district staff meet on site to shoot video footage and still photos.	PIC/OC/ District	CONS
45	Finalize copy for paid ad and public notice. Review with team.	PIC	CONS
40	Prepare Q&A for each area. Distribute copies internally.	Team	
35	Draft letter for DE to send to involved property owners, local entities, utility companies, user groups, etc., advising them of the hearing. Review with DE, make any necessary changes and transmit final copy to district. Comment due date should be 2 weeks after hearing for EA; 30 days for EIS. Request contact with district personnel if special needs are necessary.	PIC	CONS
30	Mail letter (and hearing brochure, if ready) to property owners, local entities, utility companies, Native American tribes, user groups, special interest groups, state legislators, etc., advising them of the hearing. Send copy of the letter and mailing list to PIC.	District or PIC	
21	First display ad appears in newspaper(s). Verify publication and file copy in hearing file.	PIC	
20	Print project brochure and mail to targeted audience specifically and to general public as a mail drop.	PIC	CONS
15	Report on any issues that might affect hearing to PIC.	DE & R/W	
15	Train team members at hearing site with 1/2 day of full dress rehearsal at hearing site including videos, still photos, illustrations and Q&A scripts. Include audience interaction with mock questions and answers.	PDE/PIC	CONS
15	Participate in local daily newspaper interview.	DE/PIC/ OC	
14	Second display ad appears in newspaper(s). Verify publication and file copy in hearing file.	PIC	
10	Distribute approved news release to district/appropriate media.	PIC	CONS
10	OPTIONAL: Conduct off-site public presentation of the key elements of the proposed project in a high-visibility area such as a mall (gives opportunity to test presentations and reactions).	Team	
10	Send reminder postcards with hearing information. Mail to same mailing list as DE's invitation letter (see Day 30).	PIC/ District	CONS

# Days Ahead	Activity	Who Does It	Consultant May Do It Instead
7	Legal public notice appears in newspaper(s). Verify publication, send copy to HO and file copy in hearing file.	PIC	
7	Print sign-in forms and take to hearing.	PIC	
7	Contact HO, give overview of project, brochure and district contact.	PIC	
5	Interview appears in newspaper(s). Verify and send copy to OC and PIC.	District	
5	Do any final clean-up work and review changes from dress rehearsal.	Team	
2	Final display ad appears in newspaper(s). Verify publication and file copy in hearing file.	PIC	
1	Make reminder calls to media about public hearing.	PIC	CONS
1	Meet for final briefing.	Team/HO /PIC	CONS
0	Conduct hearing.	Team/HO	
-1	Critique hearing. HO leaves one tape recording with DE or PDE.	Team/HO	
-5	Mail thank you letters, as necessary, and include written testimony forms to those who didn't attend hearing. Send copy to PIC.	PIC/DE	CONS
-7	Obtain attendance figures and number of males/females/ disabled and minorities from PIC for hearing certification.	HO/PIC	
-14	Deadline for written comments. (-30 for EIS)	PIC	
-15	Prepare transcript, certification and other necessary information and give to PIC for copying and distribution.	HO/PIC	
-15	Transmit copies of the transcript, sign-in sheets, certification of public notice and mail-in testimony to the DE, SB (8 copies), RDE, ENV, FHWA and local agencies/consulting engineer (if applicable). If local hearing, transmit original and one copy of transcript, mail-in testimony and sign-in sheets to local entity with cover memo. Keep copy of everything in file.	PIC	
-18	Transmit hearing transcript to DE and indicate required action to be taken by district.	RD	
-18	Submit location and/or Design Study Report to RD.	District	

# Days Ahead	Activity	Who Does It	Consultant May Do It Instead
-18	If Board decision is required by Administrative Policy A-13-02, Public Involvement for Location and Design Determinations: prepare board agenda item with recommendation (also see system action instructions) and submit to RD. Complete and submit board agenda item with record of decision. Send copy to district. If system action: Send board decision to local entity by certified mail within 10 days of decision and file copy in hearing file. Once construction is complete, prepare official minutes for board signature and file copy in hearing file.	District RD SB OTIS	
-18	If board decision is not required: Submit appropriate project report to RD with request for location/design approval.	District	
-20	Approve location/design of project and notify PIC and district of project approval.	CE/RD	
-20	Prepare record of decision for CE signature.	RD	
-20	Advise involved property owners and those who attended hearing of Board/CE decision through a personal letter from the DE using the mailing list from hearing invitation and sign-in sheets. File copy in hearing file.	PIC/District	CONS
-20	Prepare news release outlining decision and file copy in hearing file.	PIC/OC	CONS
-20	Close out hearing file. (-35 for EIS)		PIC

Meeting Components

FACILITATION

Description

Facilitation is guidance of a group in a problem-solving process. The group leader—a facilitator—is neutral in regard to the issues or topics under discussion. The facilitator works with the group as a whole and provides procedural help in moving toward a conclusion.

The group is managed by the facilitator with the consent of the participants. The goal of both the facilitator and the group is to arrive at a collective decision through substantive discussions.

Facilitation leads toward empowerment and consensus and has these basic features:

- Group energies are focused on a task or a limited issue.
- Discussion is structured without controlling what is said.
- Discussion is kept to the topic, with new issues identified and reformulated as they arise.
- There is equalized participation in discussion.
- The facilitator probes for consensus or agreement on issues.

Purpose

Facilitation brings out all points of view represented in the group. In a small group, the facilitator can encourage

discussion from all participants. Sharing viewpoints stimulates discussion. If there is a lack of full expression of views, a facilitator can ask hypothetical questions to get discussion moving.

Time may be saved through facilitation. Ongoing differences of opinion or stalemate within a group require a neutral facilitator. The application of facilitation skills may be useful to break the stalemate and allow the group to move toward a decision.

Facilitators work for an open process. They ensure that the group is fully aware of the issues being presented prior to the discussion of steps to be taken. They ensure that education on technical issues takes place as appropriate and seek out the stances of participants on those issues. They ensure that points are clarified and elicit follow-up on questions. Facilitators make sure that all members of the group are respectful of each other's views.

Facilitation indicates a commitment to action. A facilitated meeting takes on an importance that a regular meeting does not have. Its designation indicates a commitment by the sponsor to offer a way of overcoming a specific obstacle. Its existence demonstrates a commitment to involving citizens in the decision-making process. It demonstrates that the sponsor is open to making public comment part of the decision-making process.

Who Takes the Lead

A neutral facilitator is selected by the sponsor to lead the group. The facilitator must be accepted by the group as unbiased, constructive and fair. This person should be an experienced professional familiar with assisting group discussions via group processes, communication and conflict resolution skills. The facilitator should elicit both facts and opinions and help the group distinguish between them. It is helpful if the facilitator is also familiar with the subject matter of the discussion.

The facilitator should not express a personal opinion in this role. Neutrality should be maintained at all times. If an opinion is requested, it can be given, but the facilitator should announce that s/he is stepping out of the neutral role prior to offering the opinion. At no time should the facilitator make a decision for the group. The “what I’m hearing is” technique brings discussion back to the agenda and checks on whether people are in agreement.

The sponsor determines the agenda and schedule of the meeting. The agenda may cover one or more issues to be discussed by the group. The sponsor should meet with the facilitator to discuss the agenda and approach to be taken within the meeting. A site must be selected in a space that participants perceive to be neutral.

The facilitator conducts the meeting. The sponsor should not attempt to control the direction of the meeting once it is underway. The facilitator conducts the meeting toward its stated goals. S/he may add questions to elicit responses from individuals. The facilitator should record participants’ comments on a flip chart or butcher paper without editorializing.

Facilitation is a supplement to other techniques. A facilitator can assist an established citizens’ advisory committee to progress toward its goals. Facilitation is a requirement for a workshop or a focus group and can also be used in brainstorming or visioning sessions. It is typically used in a collaborative task force. Facilitation can be used in discussions associated with transportation fairs. Video can be used to record facilitated proceedings.

DISPLAYS

Description

Displays are used to provide information to the public and to generate conversation. At a public meeting, displays are organized by topic and a technical expert stands by to provide additional information. The display must be eye-catching and should contain a limited amount of text, the majority of which is non-technical. Although display boards can be expensive to produce, they can be designed for subsequent use at other events and locations.

Display boards must contain the ITD logo and may contain the project logo (See “logos” on page 71).

PRESENTATIONS

Description

An effective public involvement program requires an ongoing relationship with the stakeholders directly affected. Presentations can be one of the most effective methods of conveying key messages and addressing community issues. Because they may incorporate a wide variety of media—printed handouts, audio-visual aids, graphic displays, models—the audience has the opportunity to absorb and understand the information in multiple ways and in an organized fashion.

Tips for an Effective Community Presentation

- 1. Know your audience.** Understand who they are and what their concerns are. What matters to a group of seniors will be different from what matters to a PTA group. This first step lays the groundwork for everything that follows.
- 2. Customize your materials to suit your audience.** Some audiences respond better to a slide show, others prefer charts and graphs.
- 3. Respect everyone's time.** Keep the presentation as short as possible and never go over the allotted time.
- 4. Keep it simple.** Avoid being too technical. Keep in mind that in most cases, you're much closer to the issue than they are; what is familiar to you may be completely foreign to them. Your purpose is to familiarize and educate a group on issues that most directly affect them, so use layperson's language and illustrative examples or analogies. Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- 5. Leave it to the experts.** When you've determined what needs to be presented, make sure it is presented by a credible source.
- 6. Prepare an outline.** Your points are most effective if presented in an orderly fashion. A good outline keeps you from skipping important points and prevents rambling.
- 7. Practice, practice, practice.** Schedule a dress rehearsal at least two days before the presentation, to leave enough time for any changes and adjustments that may need to be made. All those involved in the presentation should participate.
- 8. Be flexible.** Sometimes the audience wants more or wants something other than what you've prepared. When appropriate to keep the audience engaged, go with the flow while maintaining control of the process.
- 9. Anticipate questions.** Start by writing out a list of questions you're likely to be asked, and then ask others to help you practice your responses. Make sure you know the answers and can articulate them confidently and clearly. If you don't know the answer to a question, be honest and promise to get back to them with an answer as soon as possible. Then keep that promise.
- 10. Don't let all of your preparation go to waste because of technical problems.** Make sure you'll have the equipment necessary to present your materials as rehearsed. Bring extra batteries, light bulbs, easels, pens, files on CD, etc. Arrive early enough to test everything before the audience arrives.
- 11. Leave them with something they can refer to later.** Bring handouts of material presented and a list of contacts for further information.
- 12. Follow up while the issue is still fresh in their minds (and yours!).** Make certain that any requests for additional information, contacts, or answers to questions are returned immediately following the presentation.

VIDEOS

Description

Video is an important tool during the life of a project and can be used in many different ways. First, video can be used to educate stakeholders about the life cycle of a project similar to the proposed project. For example, it can educate the audience about the stages and steps involved in building a new section of highway or establish bike lanes. Second, video can also be used to promote and identify the proposed project and can include a schedule of activities. This type of video is very helpful during longer, complex projects.

Purpose

The benefit of a video is that all audiences receive the same consistent and accurate message, and stakeholders are more likely to recall what they have seen and heard in a video than in, say, a speech.

A video should be six to eight minutes long (no longer) and should use text and bullet points sparingly. It should incorporate music and narration while letting the visuals carry the story.

Accompanying activities

- **Other uses:** Video is a powerful medium and may be leveraged and re-used for internal ITD communication and distributed to television stations for public service announcement or use as footage to accompany project coverage stories.
- **Other informational materials:** Videos can be supported with fact sheets and brochures to provide additional information to stakeholders.

HEARING OFFICERS

Hearing officers are the authorized representatives of the Idaho Transportation Board at a public hearing. (See Appendix 2, B-13-02 and A-13-02). The hearing officer, working with the public involvement coordinator, will certify the hearing process and documents. The originals of all hearing documents are kept by the Office of Communications; copies of the hearing certification, including all testimony received, are provided to the project manager.

TESTIMONY/COMMENT FORMS

Testimony/comment forms may be customized to encourage the public to provide information needed in the decision-making process. Care must be taken to ask questions that are neutral.

At a minimum, comment/testimony forms must contain the official name of the project, the project number and key number and, if they are distributed at a public meeting, the date and location of the meeting. (See Testimony/Comment Form and Meeting/Hearing Sign-in Sheet in Appendix 2)

APPENDIX 1 • Examples and Samples:

Scoping Questions

1. Project origin and background

- a) Why is this project in the program?
- b) Why is this project needed?
- c) What are the concerns or history of public involvement in the communities affected by this project?
- d) What does the community (elected officials and others) need to know about this project?

2. Project Impacts

- a) What are the benefits of this project?
- b) How will it improve the community?
- c) Will the project change the character or function of the highway? How?
- d) What are the environmental implications of this project?
- e) Are there any other special concerns associated with this project?
- f) What stakeholder reaction is expected?

3. Stakeholders

- a) Who is impacted by this project? Who are the project stakeholders? (note: this list should be updated as needed throughout the project.)
- b) What is the best way (or ways) to provide information to the stakeholders?
- c) What are the best ways to gather information from the stakeholders?
- d) Whose needs will be met by this project?
- e) Whose needs will not be met?
- f) Are any minority, low-income, Native American tribes, elderly or other populations with special needs affected or impacted by this project?
- g) What is the best way to develop two-way communication with minority, low-income, Native American tribes, elderly or other populations with special needs who are affected or impacted by this project?

4. Schedule

- a) What is the schedule for project development?
- b) Will the project require a merger process, and if so, why?
- c) What community events could be affected by this project?

5. Legal Questions

- a) Will right-of-way need to be purchased? If so, how much, and what actions are necessary?
- b) What are the mandates or regulations governing this project?
- c) What are the potential environmental or cultural impacts?
- d) What impacts will there be to roadways or facilities under another agency's jurisdiction?

6. Resources

- a) What resources do I need to implement public involvement for this project?
- b) What resources do I have to implement this project?
- c) If resources are not adequate, what steps can be taken?

Additional scoping questions can be found in Guide to Completing the ITD-783 Concept Report.

Responses to scoping questions should be attached to the completed ITD-2708 Preliminary Project Concept form. Enlist the public involvement coordinator's help in completing the scoping questions, if necessary. Always be sure to include the following:

- Project name
- Project manager
- Project sponsor
- Key number
- Project number

A graphic showing a green mountain range with a red line indicating a route. The text "US-95 Council Alternate Route" is written in a red, cursive font over the mountains.

US-95 Council Alternate Route

Public Involvement Plan

Project Name: US-95 Council Alternate Route

Project Manager: Wade Christiansen, P.E., ITD District 3

Project Sponsor: Idaho Transportation Department & Federal Highways Administration

Project Number: NH-3110(130)

Key Number: 8432

Project Introduction

US-95 is an important highway for motorist travelling between northern and southern Idaho. Every vehicle, large and small, travelling through Adams County must go directly through the heart of downtown Council. As the highway enters the city of Council, it makes two 90° turns. US-95 traffic is incompatible with downtown parking and pedestrian use of the roadway. Parked cars infringe on the turning movements of trucks creating a hazard for vehicles and pedestrians.

The Idaho Transportation Department has proposed an alternate route for US-95 from south of Council to the intersection of US-95 and Illinois Avenue in Council. The purpose of this project is to improve user safety and traffic flow on US-95 by eliminating the two 90-degree turns in Council, Idaho.

In order to receive federal funding for the project an environmental analysis will be performed. An environmental document will be prepared and displayed for review at a public hearing. The preparation of the Environmental Document and Concept Report is anticipated to take 2-3 years.

Goals and Objectives of Public Involvement

This project is designated as a "complex" project and requires a public involvement plan. Highway projects that qualify as complex are usually new alignments, new routes and/or reconstruction. Complex projects meet the following criteria:

- Environmental clearance expected as EA or EIS
- Have or expect public involvement
- Require a Hearing
- Require System Action
- Major R/W involvement

A graphic showing a green mountain range with a white road winding through it. The text "US-95 Council Alternate Route" is written in a stylized, cursive font over the mountains.

US-95 Council Alternate Route

The goal of the public involvement activities is to provide the public with information about the project, test public opinion, and determine if the product meets the needs of our consumer – the public. Through the application of participation and outreach activities, the public involvement process will:

- Create a public partnership
- Focus on meaningful input
- Encourage greater public participation
- Educate about ITD's process

Project Stakeholders

Project information will be disseminated to the stakeholders through the use of newspaper advertisements, project brochures, postcards, press releases, display boards, newspaper media coverage, public open house meetings and a public hearing. A mailing list will be developed from a stakeholder list. The project was originally scoped to include up to 500 stakeholders, however the mailing list can be supplemented with a zip-code mail drop to reach all of the residents of Adams County. There are approximately 1,750 addresses in Adams County.

- Stakeholders for this project will include:
- Motorists who use the highway
- Property owners within the project area
- Citizens and businesses in Council, Idaho
- Utility companies
- State and federal agencies
- State officials
- Council city officials
- Adams County Commissioners
- Irrigation companies
- Local media outlets

Project Strategy

The public involvement activities proposed by the Holladay Engineering (HEC) team are patterned after proven techniques used in market research. The public involvement strategy includes media relations, participation and outreach activities.

Media relation activities will provide a flow of information to the news media (newspaper, radio and television) about the project. The flow of information will, however, rise and fall as the project develops. Our goal is not to keep the project in the news constantly, but rather to focus media and public attention on the project at key times in the process.

US-95 Council Alternate Route

Strategic techniques will be used to get the most from media coverage. However, it is important to note news coverage is an “uncontrolled” media. News departments have final editorial control over what is covered, written or said. An ethical public relations counselor cannot guarantee news coverage.

Participation activities are designed to facilitate two-way communication between the design team and the public, agency, industry and private stakeholders. The two-way communication approach values all public input. It is more than merely having participants “feel” their input is valuable. With the two-way communication approach, the design team *genuinely* uses public and stakeholder input to shape the final product.

Outreach activities for this project are designed to provide the public with important project information and keep them informed about project activities and milestones. The HE team will utilize several communication tools to provide the public with project information.

Tools and Techniques

The communication tools and techniques that will be used to carry out the project strategy include:

- Open House Public Meetings
- Public Hearing
- Press Releases
- Newspaper Display Advertisements
- Project Brochures
- Postcards
- Local radio, Newspaper and Television Coverage (due to press release)

Public Open House Meetings

Two open house public meetings will be held within the project area prior to the hearing. The open house public meetings help the design team address issues before they become problems, paving the way for a smooth public hearing. The meetings will allow the project team to show the public project alignments and discover any issues that will need to be addressed prior to the hearing. The meetings will be held in an open-house format. A project brochure will be distributed approx. 30 days prior to the meetings. The brochure will provide the date, time and location of the meeting. Newspaper advertisements will be placed in the Adams County Recorder 21 days before the meetings and will run for two weeks. A meeting reminder postcard will be distributed approx. two weeks prior to the meetings to encourage attendance. A press release will



also be distributed to local media announcing the meetings. Display boards will be prepared to provide a clear picture of the project. Project engineers and staff will attend the meetings to listen to the public comments and answer their questions. Comment forms will be prepared and distributed at the public meetings. The ITD project manager will respond to public comments and questions in cooperation with Public Affairs.

The **first open house meeting** will be held early in the development of the project. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the project team, agency staff and the public share information about existing conditions in the area and give comments about the scope and topics that the environmental document should address. Comments collected at the meeting will be used by the design team to develop project alternatives.

The **second open house meeting** will be held after most of the environmental field work has been completed and some of the project's alternatives can be identified. The meeting will display information that is pertinent to the project's progress and completion including environmental or design issues. Input collected from the public on the alternatives will allow the project team the opportunity to address any issues prior to the public hearing.

Public Hearing

One public hearing will be held after the environmental assessment has been completed and the environmental document is ready for review by the public. The hearing will be conducted during the 30-day public review period for the EA, the hearing will be conducted simultaneously with the design hearing, no sooner than 15 days after the start of the public review period.

The purpose of the public hearing is to display the design, test public opinion and maximize public input. Therefore, it will be open to any individual who wishes to participate. We want to create a comfortable atmosphere that allows candid interaction and discourse. The public hearing will be held in an open house format. Project display boards and educational materials will be set up around the room in a "trade show" fashion. Displays could include a roadway plan, aerial photo display, noise level display, wetlands display, "before and after" displays, comments from informational meetings and traffic display. Participants will browse through the displays. Project engineers and staff will be on hand to listen to comments and answer any questions. A hearing officer will be present to record verbal testimony from the hearing participants.

A graphic showing a stylized mountain range in shades of green and blue. Overlaid on the mountains is the text "US-95 Council Alternate Route" in a red, cursive-style font.

US-95 Council Alternate Route

Press Releases

Press releases will be distributed before both public open house meetings and the public hearing to announce the meeting date, location and time. The press release will be sent out by ITD's Public Affairs office to local media outlets.

Newspaper Display Advertisements

Newspaper display advertisements will be placed in the Adams County Recorder 21 days prior to the public open house meetings and the public hearing. The advertisements will run for a two-week period. The ads will provide the meeting location, date and time.

Project Brochures

Five project brochures will be developed and distributed to the stakeholders to provide current project information. A brochure will be distributed to the stakeholders approximately 30 days prior to both public open house meetings and the public hearing. The brochures will include information about the project, upcoming meeting dates, time and location, and contact information. Two additional brochures will be distributed between open house meetings and the hearing to update the stakeholders about the status of the environmental process and the project's progress.

Postcards

A postcard will be mailed to the project stakeholders to remind them about the open house meetings and the public hearing. The postcard will announce the meeting time, date and location. The reminder will be mailed out two weeks prior to the meeting.

Summary Report of Public Involvement Process

A summary report of the public involvement process will be prepared after the public hearing to be included in the environmental document. The report will document the the overall public involvement process, each meeting's content and results, the alternatives selected, and the overall public opinion of the project.



US-95 Council Alternate Route

Resources

The resources available to the HEC team for meeting the public involvement goals and objectives for this project are adequate.

The HEC team includes two public involvement professionals to assist ITD in meeting the goals and objectives identified in this public involvement plan. The HEC public involvement team will be assisted by the HEC engineering staff with all of technical information related to the project.

Project Schedule

Scope Task Number	Public Involvement Activity	Timeline
3.1	Scope for Public Involvement	Early-May 2003
3.2	Identify Stakeholders	Early-May 2003
3.2	Updates to Stakeholder List	Throughout Project
3.3.1	1st PublicOpen House Meeting	End-July 2003
3.3.1	Summary Report of Meeting	Mid-August 2003
3.5.1	Respond to 1st Meeting Comments	Mid-August 2003
3.4.1	1st Project Update Brochure	Late-January 2004
3.3.2	2nd Public Open House Meeting	Mid-April 2004
3.3.2	Summary Report of Meeting	End-April2004
3.5.2	Respond to 2nd Meeting Comments	Early-May 2004
3.4.2	2nd Project Update Brochure	Late-January 2005
3.6	Public Hearing Announcement Postcard	Mid-July 2005
7.2.28	Public Hearing	Early-August 2005
7.2.28	Hearing Report	Late-August 2005
3.5.3	Respond to Hearing Comments	Early-September 2005
3.7	Summary Report of Public Involvement	Late-September 2005

US-95 Council Alternate Route

Roles and Responsibilities

Public Involvement tasks will be lead by Lynda Friesz Public Relations, Inc.'s (LFPR) Project Manager Lynda Friesz-Martin. Brandon Coates from LFPR will serve as the Deputy Project Manager. LFPR in coordination with ITD Public Affairs will develop and conduct the public meetings and hearing. Project team members from HEC, HDR, and ITD will participate in the meetings. LFPR, HEC, and HDR will develop meeting materials and displays. ITD Public Affairs and District 3 will approve of all materials prior to distribution to the public.

Task 3.1	Scope for Public Involvement (LFPR)
Task 3.2	Identify Stakeholders/Mailing List (HEC/LFPR)
Task 3.3	Open House Public Meetings (LFPR/HEC/HDR)*
Task 3.4	Project Updates (LFPR)
Task 3.5	Respond to Public Comments (ITD Dist 3/ITD PA)
Task 3.6	Public Hearing Announcement/Newspaper Ads (LFPR)
Task 3.7	Summary Report of Public Involvement (LFPR/HDR)
Task 7.2.28	Public Hearing/Design Hearing (HEC/HDR/LFPR)

HEC (Holladay Engineering)

LFPR (Lynda Friesz Public Relations, Inc.)

HDR (HDR, Inc.)

ITD Dist 3 (Idaho Transportation Department District 3)

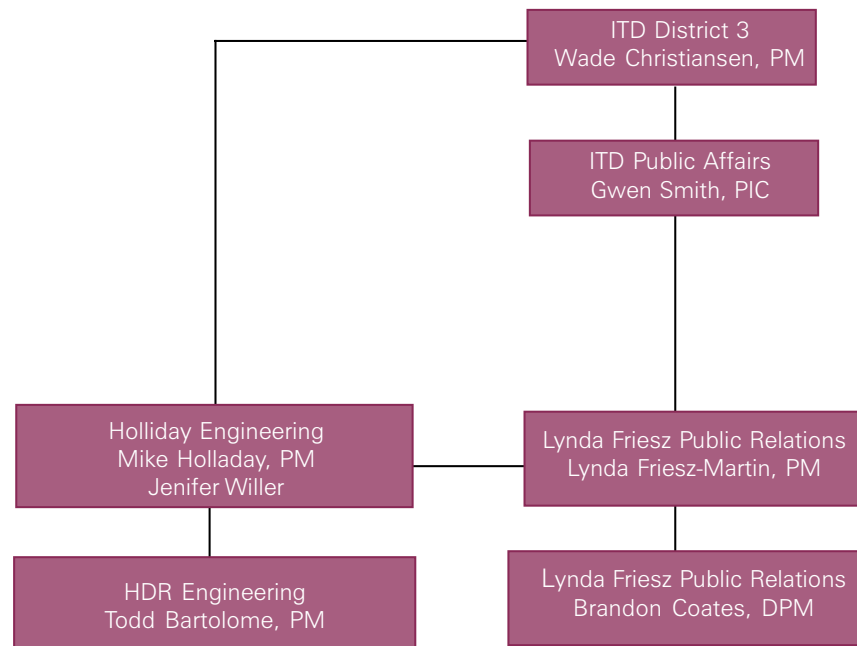
ITD PA (Idaho Transportation Department Public Affairs)

* Prior to each public meeting and hearing LFPR will develop a public involvement calendar that details the dates brochures, postcards, press releases and newspaper advertisements will be distributed to the public. (See attached example Public Involvement Calendar)

US-95 Council Alternate Route

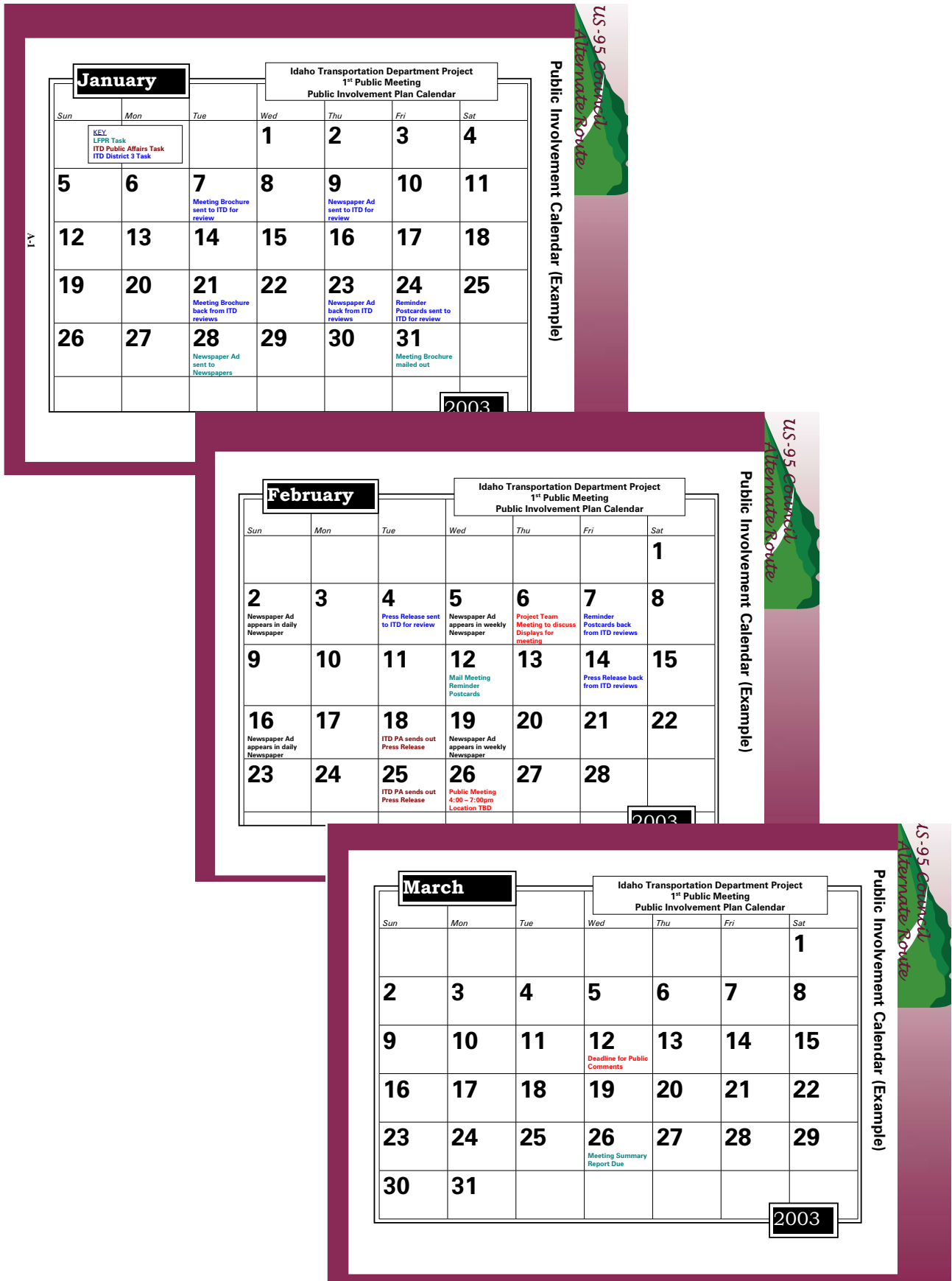
Management

Communication Structure for Public Involvement Activities



Evaluation

The public involvement strategy for this project will evolve over time as the project develops. For this reason the public involvement strategy, tools and techniques will be evaluated through consultation with ITD throughout the project to determine whether they meet the goals and objectives of the project. This process will allow the HEC team to develop the next public involvement activity to better meet the goals of the project. The final evaluation will be determined after the public hearing.



Sample Completed Project Evaluation Checklist:

Completed Project Evaluation Checklist

Goals and objectives

- ☐ Were the goals of public involvement met?
- ☐ Were the public involvement objectives met?
- ☐ How closely did the process follow the public involvement plan?
- ☐ What modifications had to be made, and were those modifications effective?
- ☐ Were changes documented and the plan updated, if needed?

Timeline

- ☐ What influence did public involvement have on the project development schedule?
- ☐ Were public involvement activities conducted at the appropriate times?

Contacts

- ☐ According to public involvement records, how many letters were sent and phone calls made?
- ☐ What was the attendance at public meetings and hearings, if held?
- ☐ How many comments were provided and which stakeholder groups do they represent?
- ☐ Did the department reach all identified stakeholders? If so, was the contact effective?

Media

- ☐ What did the media report about the project? About the department?
- ☐ What issues did they cover? Which did they criticize? Which did they applaud?
- ☐ What kind of editorials and letters were published about the project? Did ITD respond? If so, how did it respond?

The Department

- ☐ How did other department staff (district engineer, planners, headquarters, and others) view the public involvement process for the project?
- ☐ How did the Idaho Transportation Board react? What feedback, if any, did they provide?
- ☐ How effective was the communication between affected divisions involved with the project's public involvement activities?

Budget

- ☐ Did the public involvement process stay within budget? Explain. Materials
- ☐ How effective were the public involvement materials created for the project—such as brochures, news releases, newsletters, print ads, video, and others? How much did they cost?
- ☐ Was there any public reaction to the materials?
- ☐ How effective was the coordination among those who developed and distributed the materials?

Midstream adjustments and crises

- ☐ What crises, changes, or unexpected events occurred during the project?
- ☐ How well were they handled?
- ☐ How could they have been avoided?

Consultants

- ☐ How well did the public involvement consultant understand and incorporate ITD's public involvement goals and objectives into the project?
- ☐ How effective was the consultant in helping the department engage the public?
- ☐ Did the consultants follow ITD standards? (Documents, press releases, Web sites etc.)
- ☐ How was the quality of the consultant's work?
- ☐ What will I look for when selecting the next public involvement consultant?

Self

- ☐ What did I think about the process?
- ☐ What did I think went well? What didn't work?
- ☐ What would I do differently?

Example 1 Property Owner Letter:

ITD Letterhead

Date

Inside address

You are receiving this letter because your property may be affected by a proposed project to reconstruct 7.3 miles of U.S. 95 between its junction with Idaho 55 west of Marsing to just south of Homedale (between mileposts 26.3 and 33.6).

In 1999 and 2000 meetings were held to gather public input on this project. Since that time an environmental document has been completed and approved and the Idaho Transportation Department has scheduled funds to begin buying right-of-way for the project beginning in Winter 2005.

A public meeting has been scheduled to bring the Homedale community up-to-date on this project and to provide an opportunity for affected property owners to meet with ITD right-of-way staff.

Public Meeting
U.S. 95 Junction – Idaho 55 to Homedale
Thursday, Dec. 16
4:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Homedale High School Cafeteria
203 East Idaho Ave.

If you cannot attend this meeting, please contact me to schedule a time when you can review design plans that relate to your property – or call me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Project Manager
(208) XXX-XXX

or

Public Involvement Coordinator
comments @itd.idaho.gov
(208) 334-4444

Example 2 Property Owner Letter:

April 20, 20XX

Addressed to contingent property holders and
Elected officials

Re: Public Hearing,
I-84, Franklin road Interchange, Caldwell
IM-STP-NH-84-1(043)29 #7795

The Idaho Transportation Department will hold a public hearing on the I-84, Franklin Road Interchange-Caldwell project Tuesday, June 1, 20XX, between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the Best Western Hotel, Sprecht Avenue near the Franklin Exit. The proposed project will replace the I-84 overpass of Franklin Road and reconfigure Franklin's intersection with Muller Lane and 21st Street.

At the hearing, project information will be provided in an open house format, and a hearing officer will be available to take oral or written testimony on the proposed design and environmental impacts of the project.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) document will be available for public review at the following locations beginning May 7, 20XX:

Caldwell Public Library
1010 Dearborn St.

Idaho Transportation Department
3311 West State St.
Boise, ID

Idaho Transportation Department District 3
8420 Chinden Blvd.
Boise, ID

Federal Highway Administration Offices
3050 N. Lakeharbor Lane
Boise, ID

The EA document is also available on the web at www.itd.idaho.gov, choose "Get Involved", then Southwest Idaho on the map and the project name in the center column.

You will receive a project brochure in the mail about two weeks prior to the hearing. I hope you will be able to attend; however, if you cannot attend, you are invited to send your comments to: ITD Public Involvement Coordinator, PO box 7190, Boise, ID 83703, by June 30, 20XX.

ITD Project Manager

Enclosures: Comment Form and stamped return envelope

U.S. 95 THORNCREEK ROAD TO MOSCOW

JULY 2007

PROJECT UPDATE

THANK YOU for your continued involvement in the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD)'s U.S. 95 Thorncreek Road to Moscow project. Your input has helped ITD determine the alternatives/alignments being considered for U.S. 95 from Thorncreek Road to Moscow. It also has helped determine evaluation criteria and studies to conduct for the project. We appreciate the interest and support.

ITD's District 2 has completed drafting the Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for this project. The DEIS is currently in the internal ITD review process. During the review process, a public hearing will be held to gather testimony.



The U.S. 95 Thorncreek Road to Moscow Project is a study to determine an alignment for nearly 6.5 miles of U.S. 95 in Latah County.

During internal review, questions were raised about the Wildlife Assessment. Bill Ruediger of Wildlife Consulting Resources has been hired to provide an independent assessment and, if necessary, recommend additional ways to mitigate for potential wildlife impacts. The results of this review are expected in the Fall and will be included in the DFIS.

WHAT'S NEXT

You will be notified through this newsletter and local newspapers when the DEIS is available for public review. Copies will be available on CD, at the project Web site and in several locations throughout the community. During the review process, a public hearing will be held to gather testimony.

Public testimony will be incorporated into the Final EIS and sent to the Idaho Transportation Board, which will then submit it to the FHWA. The FHWA can then issue a Record of Decision that includes the final preferred alignment and approves the Final EIS. This will allow ITD to begin final design of the preferred alignment and begin to purchase the right-of-way necessary to construct the roadway.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Gather public input on issues, concerns and range of alternatives/alignments

Narrow alternatives/
alignments using
public input

Draft EIS that evaluates alternatives/alignments

Conduct ITD and FHWA review of Draft EIS*

Publish
Draft EIS
for comment

Hold public hearing

Idaho Transportation
Boa
recom
to

■ Water
thorn

*ITD currently has the internal Draft EIS. We will send the EIS to the FHWA.

HOW TO STAY INFORMED

During the review process for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, ITD will continue to provide periodic updates. The best way to stay informed:


- Watch for newsletters: if you know someone who would like to be on the mailing list, please send the name to thorncreekroadtomoscow@itd.idaho.gov
- Stop by the project kiosk, which currently is located at the Latah County Courthouse, 522 S. Adams in Moscow, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Visit www.itd.idaho.gov and choose Get Involved, North-Central Idaho and U.S. 95 Thorncreek Road to Moscow, Stage 1.
- E-mail ITD Project Manager Ken Helm at thorncreekroadtomoscow@itd.idaho.gov
- Call Ken Helm at (208) 799-5090.

ITD has discontinued the monthly breakfast meetings for the summer. Watch for a newsletter announcing when they will begin again.

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. ITD assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any ITD service, program, or activity. The department also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the department will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency. Questions? Call (208) 334-4444; TTD (208) 334-4458.

IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
P.O. Box 837
LEWISTON, IDAHO 83501-0837





I-84 Cole-Broadway Soundwalls

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) will design soundwalls at recommended locations on Interstate 84 beginning east of the Cole Road Interchange. The soundwalls will reduce the effect of interstate noise on surrounding neighborhoods now and when the existing interstate is widened.

Public input will be an important factor in the decision-making process for aesthetics on the residential side of the soundwalls. The project team will present different texture options to the public. ITD will make the final decision on the wall texture, which will be consistent on the residential side throughout the length of the corridor.

Neighborhood Outreach Events
 Saturday, Aug. 25
 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
 Details inside

Idaho Transportation Department
 Bureau ID 83707-1229
 P.O. Box 1229
 Boise, ID 83726

ISVT 184

PROJECT NEWSLETTER
 Project Number: A009(S16) • Key Number: 09616 • Summer 2007

Project Description

The Idaho Transportation Department will design soundwalls (also known as noise barriers) at recommended locations on Interstate 84 beginning east of the Cole Road Interchange and ending at the Broadway Avenue Interchange.

The soundwall project is a result of an extensive study of I-84 between the Orchard and Gowen interchanges. The study limits extended from just west of the Orchard Street Interchange to the Isaacs Canyon Interchange, east of Gowen Road. The study recommended widening I-84 along this corridor and rebuilding several interchanges.

The Orchard to Gowen study included an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate possible impacts to the environment (i.e., noise, air quality or socio-economic impacts) that would result from increased interstate capacity.

Final soundwall design and construction are subject to a decision from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Soundwall Texture Options (Residential Side)

The project team has developed aesthetic options for the look and feel of the soundwalls. The public will have an opportunity to weigh in on possible features for the residential side of the walls. ITD will consider public input as it makes the final decision on the soundwall texture.

- Shown: Proposed options for soundwall finishes on residential side
- One texture option will be selected for the entire corridor to maintain a uniform look throughout

Frequently Asked Questions

Where will the soundwalls be located?
 The soundwalls are proposed along the north side of the interstate, from east of the Cole Road Interchange to the Broadway Avenue Interchange.

When will the walls be built?
 Final design and construction can begin after a decision from FHWA has been received. It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2008 and will include:

- The continuation of the existing Cole/Overland wall to just west of the Orchard Interchange
- The wall from the east side of the New York Canal to an area adjacent to Owyhee Park
- The wall from east of the Holiday Inn to Broadway Avenue

2009 construction is programmed to include:

- A new wall from the east side of the Orchard Street Interchange to the New York Canal. This section will be constructed with the new Orchard Street Interchange.

2011 construction is programmed to include:

- A new wall on the east side of the Holiday Inn. This section will be constructed with the Vista Avenue Interchange.

How will soundwalls help with current noise levels? What are the noise levels now?
 Soundwalls can help lessen noise impacts from the interstate and provide noticeable sound reduction for residents closest to the highway. On average, current noise levels along this corridor are measured at 71 decibels (dB); by 2008, the noise level is expected to be 73 dB. Once soundwalls are constructed, that same level is expected to be reduced to 68 dB. To compare, here are how other noise rates on the decibel scale:

Load music: 100 dB	Jet aircraft at 300m altitude: 90 dB	Office or restaurant: 50 dB	Residential area at night: 40 dB
			(source: FHWA)

Do the soundwalls incorporate any safety measures?
 The project design will incorporate a crash barrier at the base of the wall.

Will my property be used for construction access?
 Crews building the soundwalls may need access to the residential side of the wall during construction. Property owners may be asked to sign a temporary construction easement, which gives construction staff permission to enter the property while constructing the soundwalls. Once construction activities are complete, the easement expires.

What will happen to my trees and irrigation along the interstate?
 The project team has selected a construction method that will minimize impacts to residents. Property owners will be contacted prior to construction if impacts are expected.

Will there be any nighttime construction?
 Some construction activities may be performed at night, including delivery of construction materials. If nighttime construction is required, residents will be informed ahead of time. Every effort will be made to avoid disruptions to residents.

STAY INFORMED

- Request an informational presentation to your neighborhood group
- Contact the ITD Public Involvement Coordinator:
 (208) 334-4444
 (208) 334-4458 (TDD)
 comments@itd.idaho.gov
- Visit the project
 Web site
itd.idaho.gov
 Click on Get Involved;
 Southwest Idaho; I-84,
 Cole Interchange to
 Broadway Interchange
 Soundwalls Project

Public Involvement Opportunities

Door-to-Door Visits (Late August)

- Project team members will visit property owners to gather input, provide the latest project information, and discuss temporary construction easements needed for the construction phase of the project.

Neighborhood Outreach and Events

SATURDAY, AUG. 25		MONDAY, SEPT. 10	
9:30 - 11 a.m.	Hillcrest Shopping Center 5200 W. Overland Rd.	7 - 9 p.m.	Hillcrest Neighborhood Association Annual Meeting Phillips Park 2295 S. Phillips St.
11:30 - 1:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn Parking Lot 3300 Vista Ave.		
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.	Phillips Park 2295 S. Phillips St.		

• Project team members will have the latest information about aesthetic options and answer questions about the project. Free ice cream and treats will be available for attendees.

Project Mailings (Dec. 2007/Jan. 2008)

- A postcard announcing the final design of the wall will be mailed to area property owners. The information will also be available on ITD's Web site at **itd.idaho.gov**.

Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act
 Persons needing accommodations to participate in project activities are urged to contact the Public Involvement Coordinator at (208) 334-4444 or TDD/TTY (208) 334-4458.

Se les recomienda a las personas que necesitan un intérprete o arreglos especiales que llamen a la coordinadora de participación pública al (208) 334-4444 o TDD/TTY (208) 334-4458.

Project Schedule

2003 - 2007	Aug. 15, 2007	Summer/Fall 2007	October 2007	Dec. 2007 / Jan. 2008	Spring 2008	Spring 2009	Spring 2011
Orchard to Gowen Environmental Assessment (EA)	Public Hearing Orchard to Gowen EA	Soundwall design process begins	A decision from Federal Highway Administration is anticipated	Design is finalized and project is put out for construction bids	Construction scheduled	Construction programmed	Construction programmed
	Public comment period continues through Aug. 29	Neighborhood meetings; input gathered about wall texture on residential side	Upon receiving FHWA's decision, soundwall design is finalized	A postcard announcing the final decision on the soundwalls' texture will be mailed to area property owners; information posted to ITD Web site	Cole to Broadway	Orchard Street Interchange area	Vista Avenue Interchange area

Funding

The GARVEE Transportation Program allows Idaho to plan, design and build more highway projects in less time than through traditional transportation funding methods. It uses Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle (GARVEE) bonds to fund critical improvements in six transportation corridors throughout the state. For the Cole to Broadway soundwall project, construction scheduled in 2008 is part of the original GARVEE bonds approved by the Idaho Legislature in 2006. Funding for soundwall construction in 2009 and 2011 is subject to legislative approval.

itd.idaho.gov/Projects/D3

Newsletters/Brochures: Cheyenne Overpass EA Brochure

Public Involvement

The Cheyenne EA study team met with the public frequently during the development and refinement of the alternatives.

Public Meetings	Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings
May 2000	October 2000
January 2001	May 2001
	December 2001

Public Comments Regarding Alternatives

Cheyenne The majority of public comments do not support this alternative. The proximity to Indian Hills School causes safety concerns.

Leo-Harper Several public comments support this alternative. Some residents are concerned about more traffic through Ross Park. This was a project-wide concern and not specific to this alternative. This alternative was selected as the Preferred Alternative.

Shoshoni Several public comments support these alternatives. The proximity to the Edison Fichter Nature Area removed these options from consideration. Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), if another viable option is available, the project team must avoid these types of public recreation areas.

Hildreth Several public comments support these alternatives—but in the future. Some residents are concerned these alignments are too far from the current crossing to be effective.


Since these meetings, the study team has been analyzing the alternatives and working with Local, State, and Federal officials to complete the Cheyenne Overpass EA. Pocatello City and the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) would like to hear your comments about the project. Comments can be submitted to Gwen Smith, Public Information Coordinator, Idaho Transportation Department, P.O. Box 7129, Boise, ID 83707.

Cheyenne Overpass Environmental Assessment

Project Update May 2005


Cheyenne Overpass Environmental Study Released

It's been a long road, but the City of Pocatello recently completed the Cheyenne Overpass Environmental Assessment (EA). The name is a little misleading, since no overpass is currently proposed on Cheyenne Avenue, but it reflects the original intent of the project. The project was initiated in 1999 to look for ways to improve safety at the at-grade Union Pacific Railroad crossing on Cheyenne Avenue in Pocatello. Since that time, the City of Pocatello has been working to complete the Environmental Assessment for the project. An Environmental Assessment is a study that develops possible solutions or alternatives that will meet the purpose of the project and address the needs for the project. The study then looks at how the possible solutions will affect the surrounding natural and human environments.



The Cheyenne Overpass EA looked at several alternatives to improve safety and reduce traffic delays at the crossing as well as improve east-to-west travel throughout the area. After more than 5 years of analysis, the EA suggests the best or "preferred" alternative is to build a new alignment and overpass called the Leo-Harper Alternative northwest of Cheyenne Avenue. The existing Cheyenne Avenue railroad crossing would then be closed and the public would use the Leo-Harper overpass to cross the tracks. The Leo-Harper Alternative would be constructed in two phases as funding becomes available (see page 3).

Project Background



Purpose of the Project

- The purpose of the project is the following:
 - Eliminate the traffic delays and safety concerns at the Cheyenne Avenue at-grade railroad crossing
 - Improve east-west travel in the area


Needs That Must Be Addressed

- The at-grade rail crossing limits and slows east-west travel.
- The Long-Range Transportation Plan identifies the Cheyenne Avenue crossing as a barrier to mobility in the Indian Hills-Johnny Creek area.

Alternatives Considered


Several alternatives were considered to address the needs of the project. The alternatives considered were:

Northern Project Area



- A-Cheyenne Avenue Alternative
- B-Shoshoni North Alternative
- C-Shoshoni South Alternative


Southern Project Area



- D-Hildreth North Alternative
- E-Hildreth South Alternative
- F-Leo-Harper Alternative
- No-Build Alternative (carried forward for a baseline comparison)


(EXT-An Extension option was also proposed to avoid a tunnel under I-15)

The following alternatives were carried forward for detailed analysis in the Environmental Assessment:




Phases of Construction

Phase 1
Construct a five-lane, east-west road from Bannock Highway to South 2nd Avenue. Tie in to the existing South 2nd Avenue alignment. Close the existing Cheyenne Avenue railroad crossing and remove the bridge over the Portneuf River. Cheyenne Avenue would dead-end just west of the existing Portneuf River bridge crossing.



The design for the south 2nd Avenue tie-in ramp varies slightly from this rendering.

Phase 2
Extend the five-lane roadway from South 2nd Avenue to South 5th Avenue, crossing under I-15.



The design for the south 2nd Avenue tie-in ramp varies slightly from this rendering.

Project Impacts

The matrix below was used to help weigh and compare the alternatives.

Impacts	Alternatives Not Carried Forward for Detailed Study						Alternatives Carried Forward	
	Cheyenne Avenue	Shoshoni North	Shoshoni South	Hildreth North	Hildreth South	Extension Option	No-Build	Leo-Harper
Residential relocations	9	6	2	0	0	0	0	0
Safety concerns	High	High	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Noise impacts (affected receptors)	6	4	2	1	1	3	0	3
Section 4(f) (recreational) (acres)	None	None	0.7	None	None	None	None	None
Section 4(f) (historical/archaeological)	3 sites	1 site	None	1 site	None	None	None	None
Visual impacts	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	Low	High
Vegetation loss (acres)	9.3	14.3	3.5	4.8	6.5	5.4	None	7.8
Meets projected traffic needs	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

Project Schedule

Scoping	Impact Analysis	Document Release	Decision Document	Design/Build Phase 1	Design/Build Phase 2
May 15, 2000 – July 31, 2000	August 2000 – March 2005	May 15, 2005	Summer 2005	Fall 2005 – Fall 2007	
Issues and potential solutions were identified. A 75-day public comment period was initiated.	Analysis of how the potential solutions would impact the surrounding environment. A Preferred Alternative was selected.	The environmental document is available for public review and comment for 30 days. Comments are due June 15.	Federal Highway Administration determines if there is a Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) or if more analysis is required.	If the deciding agencies release a FONSI, final design and construction proceed.	When Phase 1 is completed, the City of Pocatello will work to identify funding for Phase 2 design and construction.

Copies of the EA are available for review at the following locations:

Pocatello City Offices	Marshall Public Library	ITD District 5 Offices
911 North 7th Avenue Pocatello, Idaho 83201	113 S. Garfield Avenue Pocatello, Idaho 83204	5151 South 5th Avenue Pocatello, Idaho *3205

Copies of the EA as well as other project-related information are also available on the ITD Web site at <http://itd.idaho.gov/>.

FRANKLIN INTERCHANGE



Franklin Road Interchange

Project Background

This project will replace the I-84 overpass at Franklin Road and reconfigure Franklin's intersections with Muller Lane and 21st street. It will provide better traffic flow now and avoid gridlock in the future. The interchange was built nearly 40 years ago. Franklin road currently serves an average of 14,000 vehicles per day. Projections indicate that by 2009 it will need to provide efficient service for 18,000 vehicles per day, and by 2029 that number will have grown to 33,800.

During the winter of 2000-2001, a preliminary concept design study report was prepared to evaluate the need for updating the existing interchange and provide potential solutions and preliminary costs. During 2001, the Idaho

Transportation Department added the project to its Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). The STIP is a priority list of projects/programs to be carried out based on an inclusive transportation planning process and approved by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. In 2002 a consulting engineering firm was selected and the design effort was begun.



Phased Construction

Construction will be completed in two phases. In Phase I, a new, four-lane overpass will be constructed alongside the current, two-lane structure. During construction, two-way traffic will continue to be maintained on the current structure. Phase I will also see the reconfiguration of Franklin's intersections with Muller Lane on the project's northeast end and 21st street on the southwest. Phase I construction is slated to begin during 2006.

(Continued on other side)



FRANKLIN INTERCHANGE



considered. The most noteworthy difference between them is the design of the entrance and exit ramps from the Interstate. One design is similar to the existing, "diamond" pattern; the other would be partial cloverleaf.

Questions and Answers

What environmental impacts will the project have?

The project will impact a small wetland area near the intersection of Franklin Road with 21st street. Additionally, a partial cloverleaf design would require greater right-of-way than a diamond pattern and would, therefore, impact more land. If a siphon, a rectangular pipe that will lower the level of the canal where it passes under the road, can be built in the Notus Canal the impacts to the businesses at Farm City will be minimal. If the canal must be bridged, the road will be higher at Farm City and several businesses will be substantially impacted. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will decide whether the bridge must be constructed or if the siphon will be acceptable.

Will access to businesses and residences in the area be preserved during construction?

Phased construction will allow full access for all neighboring residences and businesses throughout the project's duration. However, there may be some temporary disruption during the different phases of construction.

Will the project involve night shifts?

At this stage of design, it is not yet known if night work will be required. As the design process proceeds, work schedule requirements will be determined.

Will employment opportunities be available for local workers?


Employment issues and construction schedules will be decided following the selection of an overall project contractor.

How can I learn more about the project as it develops and how can I provide my input and opinions about the design?

Public input is an important element of the design process. The Idaho Transportation Department and the design consultants will schedule two additional public meetings in the coming months. These meetings provide opportunities for the public to learn more about design alternatives and for project managers to collect public comment. After the environmental document has been approved, a public hearing will be held to get comments for the final design.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Gwen Smith, Public Involvement Coordinator at (208) 334-4444 or ITD, PO Box 7129, Boise, ID 83707.

Postcard: Cheyenne Overpass



Leo-Harper Alternative-Phase 1


Actual design may vary slightly from the above graphic representation.


Cheyenne Overpass

Environmental Assessment
Pocatello
Public Hearing and Open House

Tuesday
May 2005
4 - 7 p.m.


Pocatello City Hall
911 north 7th Avenue
Pocatello, Idaho





Cheyenne Overpass Team
3995 South 700 East, Suite 100
Salt Lake City, UT 84107

Cheyenne Overpass Project Area



The Environmental Assessment and other project-related information are also available at <http://itd.idaho.gov>. For more information, contact the Pocatello City Engineering Department, (208) 243-6212.

The City of Pocatello and the Idaho Transportation Department (IDT) invite you to attend a public hearing for the Cheyenne Overpass Environmental Assessment. The study looked at several alternatives to accomplish the following objectives:

- Improve safety at the Union Pacific Crossing of Cheyenne Avenue in Pocatello.
- Improve east-to-west travel in the area

Stop by the open-house hearing anytime between 4 and 7 p.m., view the display materials, and talk to project representatives. No formal presentation is scheduled. Take a few minutes to let us know what you think about the study and the route that has been chosen as the Preferred Alternative, the Leo-Harper Alternative.

Comments will be accepted in writing or you can have a certified hearing official record your comments. Copies of the Environmental Assessment are available at the following locations for review:

Pocatello City Offices 911 North 7th Ave. Pocatello	Marshall Public Library 113 S. Garfield Ave. Pocatello	ITD District 5 Offices 5151 South 5th Ave. Pocatello
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Comments regarding the project can be submitted to Gwen Smith, Public Information Coordinator, Idaho Transportation Department, P.O. Box 7129, Boise, ID 83707.

Karcher Interchange Construction Project



Karcher Interchange Construction Project

The Idaho Transportation Department's Karcher Interchange project will provide a new access to Interstate 84, benefit traffic flow and provide better direct access to Idaho 55.

The design incorporates four major features:

The interchange overpass will be five lanes wide, including a center turn lane. It will include five bridges — three over Indian Creek, one over the railroad tracks, and one over I-84. It will also have bike lanes, sidewalks, curb and gutter.

A new roadway will extend from the interchange to Karcher Road/Idaho 55 past Edwards Cinemas. This road will be five lanes wide, including a center turn lane.

The connecting roadway from existing Karcher Road east of the interstate overpass (Karcher Connector) will be two lanes wide and will connect with the overpass at a junction with Midland Road. The existing Karcher Road will be a right-turn only at Nampa/Caldwell Boulevard.

Following the completion of the Karcher Interchange, Nampa/Caldwell Boulevard (Idaho 55/I-84B) will be resurfaced between Karcher Road and Nampa Boulevard.

The Karcher Interchange project began in summer 2005. It is expected to be complete in winter 2006. The Nampa/Caldwell Boulevard resurfacing is expected to take place in summer 2007.

Central Paving Co. of Boise is the contractor on the \$30 million Karcher Interchange project.

For more information call ITD Public Affairs at 334-8004.



Legal Notice: Cheyenne Overpass

**Notice of Environmental Assessment Availability and Public Hearing
Concerning Project #: DHP – 1564(001) Key No. 7508
Cheyenne Overpass Project**

NOTICE: The Environmental Assessment (EA) and other project information for the Cheyenne Overpass Project will be available for public inspection on Sept. 26, 2005 at the following locations in Pocatello:

Pocatello City Offices (Building Dept. Counter) 911 N 7th Ave. Pocatello, Idaho 83201	Marshall Public Library (Reference Desk) 113 S. Garfield Pocatello, Idaho 83204	ITD District 5 Offices (Front Desk) 5151 South 5th Ave. Pocatello, Idaho 83205
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The EA is also available at the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) headquarters and the Federal Highway Administration Offices in Boise.

The EA as well as other project-related information are also available on the Idaho Transportation Department Web site at: <http://www.itd.idaho.gov/projects/>. Choose Southeast Idaho on the map and then Cheyenne Overpass Environmental Assessment.

Written testimony, statements, or exhibits pertaining to the Cheyenne Overpass EA will become part of the record for this project if postmarked by Oct. 28, 2005. Address any such items to:

Public Involvement Coordinator
P.O. Box 7129
Boise, ID 83707-1129

NOTICE is hereby given that a public hearing will be held at the Pocatello City Hall, 911 North 7th Ave. on Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2005 from 4-7 p.m. The purpose of the hearing is to provide interested individuals, agencies, groups, and others an opportunity to provide testimony on the proposed changes to the location, design and environmental impacts of the project. The public will have the opportunity to view displays, ask questions and testify for or against the changes to the project.

The hearing, to be held in open house format, will describe the findings of the Cheyenne Overpass environmental assessment. The EA team looked at a number of possible alternatives to reduce traffic delays and improve safety at the Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) crossing of Cheyenne Avenue as well as improve east-west travel throughout the area. The study team considered the effectiveness of the routes as well as the associated impacts of each alignment when identifying a Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative begins just south of Leo Lane and Bannock Highway and proceeds east across undeveloped pastures and a tree farm before crossing the River and the UPRR tracks and ties-in at South 2nd Avenue.

From the tie-in point east of South 2nd Avenue, the alignment crosses BLM land currently leased to the City of Pocatello, passes beneath I-15, and ends at South 5th Avenue near the mobile home park. The construction of this alternative would be completed in two phases. A “no build” alternative is also still under consideration.

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. ITD assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any ITD service, program, or activity. The department also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the department will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency. For accommodations call 334-4444; TTD (208) 334-4458.

Public Hearing Notice



Here is some of the information that will be shown:

What is the purpose of this project?

Why is this project needed?

How will this project improve the area?

What alternatives were considered?

Why was the Preferred Alternative selected?

What happens if this project is not built?

How will this project impact the surrounding area?

When would this project be constructed?

We Want to Hear From YOU!

**4 to 7 p.m.
Wednesday, October 12
Pocatello City Hall
911 North 7th Ave., Pocatello**

We have completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Cheyenne Overpass Project. Come review the findings and tell us what you think.

Copies of the EA as well as other project-related information are available on the ITD Web site at <http://itd.idaho.gov/d5> and click on Cheyenne Overpass Project, as well as at the following locations:

Marshall Public Library
113 S. Garfield
Pocatello

Pocatello City Offices
911 N 7th Ave
Pocatello

ITD District 5 Offices
5151 South 5th
Pocatello

Comments regarding this project can be submitted to Gwen Smith, Idaho Transportation Department, P.O. Box 7129, Boise, ID 83707 by **October 31, 2005**. For more information, call the Pocatello City Engineering Department, 234-6212.

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. ITD assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any ITD service, program, or activity. The department also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the department will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency. For accommodations call Gwen Smith (208) 334-4444, TTD (208) 334-4458.



— Public Notice —

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) determined that the Leo-Harper Alternative will have no significant impact on the built or human environment based on the completed Environmental Assessment (EA).

The City of Pocatello initiated the Cheyenne Overpass project in 1999 to improve safety at the at-grade Union Pacific Railroad crossing on Cheyenne Avenue and to find a connecting roadway from South 5th Avenue to Bannock Highway.

The draft EA document was completed and offered for public review and testimony in October 2005. The document identified Leo-Harper as the preferred alternative.

As a result of testimony received, the EA was finalized and a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) was issued for the Leo-Harper Alternative. The FONSI is available upon request from ITD, the City of Pocatello, and FHWA. An Adobe PDF version is also available at itd.idaho.gov:

Click "Get Involved," then "Southeast Idaho," then "Cheyenne Overpass"



Key Number 7508
Project Number DHP – 1564(001)

News Release: I-84 Caldwell to Meridian

May 7, 2007

Contact:
Gwen Smith
Public Involvement Coordinator
(208) 334-4444

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Long-term improvements for the I-84 Caldwell to Meridian Corridor to be discussed

BOISE - A study to determine long-term improvements needed for Interstate 84 (I-84) from Caldwell to Five Mile Road is being conducted, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) announced.

The public is invited to attend one of two meetings on May 15 or 17 concerning the improvements needed for the corridor segment between the Karcher Interchange and Five Mile Road. The open house meetings will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 15, at Birch Elementary School, 6900 Birch Lane in Nampa and Thursday, May 17, at Mountain View High School, 2000 S. Millennium Way in Meridian.

Meeting participants can review information about the Karcher Interchange to Five Mile Road Environmental Study and participate in facilitated work sessions to discuss their concerns and ideas. Work sessions will begin at 4:15 p.m., 5:15 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. at each meeting.

ITD will use Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle (GARVEE) bonds to fund this study from Karcher Interchange to Five Mile Road; the remaining segment from Caldwell to the Karcher Interchange is being studied using state funds.


GARVEE is an innovative way for Idaho to use bond proceeds to build more highway projects in less time than through traditional funding methods. The bonds will be repaid with future federal highway dollars.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for the Karcher Interchange to Five Mile Road segment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study will address the projected traffic growth on I-84 between the Karcher Interchange and Five Mile Road. It is intended to ensure that impacts to the natural and human environment caused by improvements are addressed. A study of noise, air quality, traffic, structures and geotechnical concerns will be also be conducted. Throughout the study process the public will be asked to help identify issues, make recommendations, and provide input on concepts.

For more information about this project visit ITD's website at www.itd.idaho.gov - click on Get Involved; choose Southwest Idaho on the map in the upper left corner and I-84, Karcher Interchange to Five Mile Environmental Study in the center column.

-30-

Display Ads:



Open House
Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2006
5:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Aberdeen City Council Chambers
17 North Main St.


The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is developing a long-range corridor plan for the 30-mile segment of Idaho 39 from North Pleasant Valley Road in Power County to Pingree in Bingham County.

ITD would like you to share your experiences using Idaho 39. Stop by between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. to discuss issues and problems we should examine as part of this corridor plan. We want to know how this highway segment currently functions for you and how you would like it to function in the future.

Persons needing an interpreter or special accommodations are urged to contact Gwen Smith, Public Involvement Coordinator at 208-334-4444 or TDD/TDY 208-334-4458.

Se les recomienda a las personas que necesiten un intérprete o arreglos especiales que llamen a la coordinadora de participación pública, Gwen Smith, al (208) 334-4444 ó TDD/TDY (208) 334-4458.

For information and questions, please contact
Judy Harmon, ITD Project Manager
(208) 239-3369
 Idaho Transportation Department
 District 5
 P.O. Box 4700
 Pocatello, ID 83205
 judy.harmon@itd.idaho.gov




Public Information Meeting

Wednesday, June 1
Canyon Creek Bridge Replacement
Mountain Home Highway District

The Mountain Home Highway District is planning a bridge replacement across Canyon Creek on Mayfield Road in Elmore County. The purpose of this project is to improve motorist safety by replacing the existing single-lane timber bridge. The project also includes widening and rebuilding the Mayfield Road approaches to the bridge as well as some minor utility relocation.

The open house meeting will be at the Mountain Home Hwy District
1208 NW Mashburn Road - stop in any time between 2 & 5 p.m.

If you need any accommodation to fully participate in the meeting, please call (208) xxx-xxxx by May 25.



Forum on
Transportation Investment

Public Meeting
Thursday, July 20, 2006 - 2 p.m.
Coeur d'Alene Inn - Hayden Room
414 W. Appleway, Coeur d'Alene

The public is invited to learn about the forum's findings and recommendations for transportation funding, and to provide comment regarding local transportation needs.

The meeting, hosted by the Idaho Transportation Board, will begin with a 30-minute presentation on the forum's work, followed by an opportunity for public comment and discussion. Written comments may be sent to:

ITD Public Involvement Coordinator, P.O. Box 7129, Boise, ID 83707

Persons needing an interpreter or special accommodations are urged to contact Gwen Smith, Public Involvement Coordinator at 208-334-4444 or TDD/TDY 208-334-4458 • Se les recomienda a las personas que necesiten un intérprete o arreglos especiales que llamen a la coordinadora de participación pública, Gwen Smith, al (208) 334-4444 ó TDD/TDY (208) 334-4458.

Radio Scripts:**Radio script produced by ITD Office of Communications
and distributed to local stations****Date:** May 7, 2007**Title:** I-84, Karcher Interchange to Five Mile Environmental Study
Public Meeting**Client:** Idaho Transportation Department**Spot #:****Length¹:** :60 RADIO

EFFECTS	AUDIO
News intro music	News Reporter: And now a look at traffic from our eye in the sky.
Helicopter in	Traffic Reporter: Looks like stop and go traffic from the Karcher Interchange through Five Mile Road on the interstate.
Helicopter out	Driver Woman: Traffic again? (sigh) It's the same thing every day.
Soft background music	Announce Woman: Are you thinking about improvements that need to be made to Interstate 84? Announce Woman: Would you like to have a voice in the discussions about needed improvements between the Karcher Interchange and Five Mile Road? Please join the Idaho Transportation Department in a study to determine the long-term improvements for I-84 from the Karcher Interchange to Five Mile Road. Open house meetings will be held on May 15th at Birch Elementary School, 6900 Birch Lane in Nampa and May 17 at Mountain View High School, 2000 S. Millennium Way in Meridian. The meetings will run from 4 to 7 p.m. For more information call 334-4444 or 334-8290. This message was brought to you by the Idaho Transportation Department.
Music fade out	

Radio Scripts: Script sent to Spanish language stations

Note: This script was sent to Spanish-speaking radio stations. Station personnel translated and read the script.

NARRATOR:

BIG IMPROVEMENTS ARE ON THE WAY TO THE FRANKLIN EXIT AND OVERPASS ON EYE-84 IN CALDWELL. THE IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT WANTS YOU TO GIVE THEM YOUR IDEAS ABOUT THE BEST WAY TO IMPROVE THE INTERSECTION FOR FUTURE TRAFFIC.

THAT'S WHY THE IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT IS HOLDING A PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY JUNE FIRST AT THE BEST WESTERN HOTEL ON SPECHT AVENUE NEAR THE FRANKLIN EXIT FROM FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON UNTIL 8 IN THE EVENING. THERE WILL HAVE EXHIBITS AND PEOPLE TO EXPLAIN WHAT IS PLANNED FOR THE PROJECT. A HEARING OFFICER WILL BE AVAILABLE TO TAKE YOUR THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK WITH THE HEARING OFFICER, YOU CAN FILL OUT A COMMENT FORM AND IT WILL BECOME PART OF THE RECORD. A SPANISH TRANSLATOR CAN BE AVAILABLE TO HELP EXPLAIN THE PROJECT.

THAT'S TUESDAY, JUNE FIRST AT THE BEST WESTERN MOTEL JUST BE THE FRANKLIN EXIT TO THE FREEWAY.

APPENDIX 2 • References, Worksheets and Checklists:

SAFETEA-LU Website: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/index.htm>

LEP Plan (Title VI) Overview: <http://itd.idaho.gov/civil/T6Overview.htm>

Bibliography of Resources:

Communication: A Key to Success, Department of Transportation, KDOT Public Involvement Plan, prepared for the Kansas Department of Transportation by Woodward-Clyde International-Americas, Overland Park, Kansas, October 1997.

Community Impact Assessment: A Quick Reference for Transportation, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, September 1996

Context Sensitive Solutions Guide, Idaho Transportation Department, 2006

Design Manual: Roadway Design, Idaho Transportation Department, January 2007

Enhancing Maryland Highways with the People in Mind: a Guide for Community Involvement, State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, 1996.

Idaho Corridor Planning Guidebook, Idaho Transportation Department, Division of Planning, December 2006.

Idaho Transportation Department Guidebook to Public Involvement 2001: Development of Highway Projects, Idaho Transportation Department Office of Public Affairs, 2001

Limited English Proficiency Plan, Idaho Transportation Department Equal Opportunity Office Title VI Program, October 2006

Improving Dialogue With Communities: A Short Guide for Government Risk Communication, Division of Science and Research, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, January 1988

Innovations in Public Involvement for Transportation Planning, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Washington DC, 1996

NCHRP Report 480: A Guide to Best Practices for Achieving Context Sensitive Solutions, National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, 2002

Project Participation, Virginia Department of Transportation, Policy Manual for Public Participation in Transportation Projects, March 15, 1999

Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-Making, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, September 1996

Techniques for Effective Public Participation Student Workbook, International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), Denver CO, 2003

Utilizing Community Advisory Committees for NEPA Studies, AASHTO Practitioner's Handbook 05, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Center for Environmental Excellence, December 2006.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The Idaho Transportation Department has adopted an Environmental Ethic to guide its work and accomplish its mission, as well as to implement the principles and priorities of the statewide transportation vision, in a manner that employs a Context Sensitive Solutions approach. The Idaho Transportation Department Environmental Ethic is as follows:

“The Idaho Transportation Department respects and values the many facets of Idaho’s natural and human environment and will protect and enhance those assets while providing high quality, fiscally-responsible transportation systems for the citizens of Idaho.”

Context Sensitive Solutions:

The Idaho Transportation Department shall apply the principles of Context Sensitive Solutions to all department projects, plans and/or programs.

The Context Sensitive Solutions approach can be summarized by the following principles:

- To address integration of the transportation system, the Purpose and Need of the project plan, and/or program will: consider the safety and mobility needs for improvement; ensure financial feasibility and sustainability; and address all modes of travel.
- To utilize a collaborative public involvement process involving citizens and affected agencies early and continuously throughout the process to find the balance among safety, mobility, community and environmental goals, plans and/or programs that results in improvements to quality of life.
- To consider the total context and design of plans, projects and/or programs with nature by using an interdisciplinary team that: tailors planning and design to project needs; applies flexibility inherent in design standards, funding tools, and transportation and land use plans; so as to incorporate aesthetics as an integral part of good design that will preserve or enhance the asset value within the statewide transportation system.

Accordingly, the Idaho Transportation Department is committed to embracing the spirit and intent of the National Environmental Policy Act for all transportation plans, programs and projects, regardless of whether or not they are federally funded. The guiding principles of the National Environmental Policy Act have been incorporated into the Idaho Transportation Department transportation planning and project development process, as well as construction and maintenance operations of the state transportation system.

It is the responsibility of all Idaho Transportation Department employees to recognize and consider these essential principles and to appropriately include them in the transportation planning and decision-making processes to assure accountability throughout the department.

Approved by the Board on:

CHARLES L. WINDER
Board Chairman

Date

This policy based on:

- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
- 23 CFR 771
- Decision by the Idaho Transportation Board

Former dates of B-13-03:

New Policy

Cross-reference to related Board Policies:

B-05-05 ROADSIDE VEGETATION

B-05-14 SAFETY REST AREAS

B-09-04 CORRIDOR PLANNING FOR IDAHO TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

B-09-08 BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

B-11-05 CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

B-14-07 LANDSCAPING

BOARD POLICY B-13-02

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR LOCATION AND DESIGN DETERMINATIONS

The Idaho Transportation Department shall seek public involvement on transportation projects to ensure that project locations and designs are consistent with federal, state, and local goals and objectives; and that ample opportunity is provided for public input. The Director shall determine the course of action to achieve public involvement.

Highway projects that involve federal funds must have a public hearing, or an opportunity for a public hearing, when there is:

- Acquisition of significant amounts of right of way.
- Substantial change of the layout or function of connecting roadways or of the facilities being improved.
- Significant adverse impact on abutting property or when litigation or public controversy is anticipated.
- Significant social, economic, and/or environmental effects on the surrounding area.

Projects financed totally with state funds must have a public hearing or an opportunity for a public hearing when :

- The state highway serving or transversing any city is to be abandoned, relocated, or replaced.
- Significant public interest or controversy surrounds the project.

The Federal Highway Administration may also request a public hearing when a hearing is determined to be in the public's interest.

Public hearings may be waived by the appropriate management staff after determining that public awareness and support for a project is apparent and non-controversial.

Location and design determinations shall be made only after full consideration of transportation needs, socioeconomic, and environmental factors and a review of official public hearing testimony for projects where a public hearing was held.

- For location and design determinations that are subject to Section 40-310, Idaho Code (require a system action), and in situations where a proposed project is contested, the design study report, the public input certification, staff recommendations and other supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Board for further consideration and/or determination.

The Board may choose all or none of the following:

- Remove the project from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program due to lack of support/need.
- Schedule additional hearings on a) revised design, b) new/revised issues, or c) added/changed alternate locations.

Public Involvement for Location and Design Determinations

Board Policy B-13-02: Page 2

- Establish citizen and/or interdisciplinary teams to review location/design issues and make recommendations.
- Send the location/design study report and department recommendations to the appropriate local entity and request that the local entity choose an alternative that best serves their constituent's interests.
- Select the alternative the Board believes best serves statewide transportation interests.

Project determinations made by the Board shall be in resolution form within the Board minutes. For determinations subject to Section 40-310, Idaho Code, notification of the Board's resolution shall be distributed to affected officials and property owners by the Board Secretary within ten days.

- For location and design determinations that are not subject to Section 40-310, Idaho Code (do not require a system action), and not contested, the appropriate management staff shall make the project determination.
- For all other state and local projects that do not require a hearing, or when the opportunity for a hearing is given and no hearing is requested, or the public hearing was waived, the appropriate management staff shall make the project determination in coordination with any involved agencies.

Approved by the Board on:

Signed
CHARLES L. WINDER
Board Chairman

Date: 6/21/96

This Policy based on:

- 23 CFR Part 771.111 and 790 and 795, and 40 CFR, Part 1500 through 1508
- Section 23-128 and 49-1602(d), 1604(i), 1607a(f), and 1607a-1(d), U.S. CODE
- Section 21-116 and 117, and 40-121 and 310, IDAHO CODE
- Volume 7, Chapter 7, Section 5, FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY PROGRAM MANUAL
- Title VI, Civil Rights Act
- Decision by the Idaho Transportation Board

Implemented by Administrative Policy:

- A-13-02, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR LOCATION AND DESIGN DETERMINATIONS

Former date of B-13-02:

9/10/69 and 9/27/76

(combined with B-09-05, PUBLIC HEARINGS ON STATE HIGHWAY ACTIONS)

Cross-reference to related Board Policies:

- B-09-01, ANNUAL REPORT
- B-20-03, PUBLIC HEARINGS

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY A-13-02

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR LOCATION AND DESIGN DETERMINATIONS

The Idaho Transportation Department shall seek public involvement on transportation projects to ensure that project locations and designs are consistent with federal, state, and local goals and objectives; and that ample opportunity is provided for public input.

Public involvement guidelines for location and design determinations are as follows:

- The project scope, intensity of interest, and level of impact determines the number, extent, and type of public involvement. The District Engineer and/or other delegated personnel in coordination with the Public Involvement Coordinator shall determine the strategy for public involvement and the types of opportunities the public will have for submitting comments and information. The District Engineer or other appropriate management staff may waive public hearings when public awareness and support for the project is apparent and non-controversial.
- The sponsoring District or Division shall coordinate technical presentations by department personnel and other involved agencies and the preparation of pertinent material for the meetings and/or hearings.
- A Public Hearing Officer shall be appointed for each public hearing to receive official public hearing testimony.
- After completion of the public hearing procedures, the Public Involvement Coordinator shall distribute copies of the official public hearing testimony and a certification of public input. The public hearing testimony and other hearing documentation shall be maintained in Public Affairs.
- Public input received before or after the official public testimony period shall be added to the project file.
- The District Engineer or other appropriate management staff shall prepare a location and/or design study report. The design study report documents environmental, social, and economic impacts, summarizes significant design/location considerations and includes the certification of public input and proposed resolutions of identified public concerns.

Location and design determinations shall be made only after full consideration of transportation needs, socioeconomic, and environmental factors and a review of official public hearing testimony for projects where a public hearing was held.

Public Involvement for Location and Design Determinations

Administrative Policy A-13-02: Page 2

Project determinations and approvals shall be as follows:

- For location and design determinations that are subject to Section 40-310, Idaho Code, (require a system action) and in situations where a proposed project is contested, the environmental document, the design study report, the public input certification, staff recommendations, and other supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Board for further consideration and/or determination.
- For location and design determinations that are not subject to Section 40-310, Idaho Code (do not require a system action), and not contested, the appropriate management staff shall make the project determination.
- For all other state and local projects that do not require a hearing, or when the opportunity for a hearing is given and no hearing is requested, or the public hearing was waived, the appropriate management staff shall make the project determination in coordination with any involved agencies.

The District Engineer or other appropriate management staff in coordination with Public Affairs shall inform the public of project determinations. Additional public input will be accepted throughout the life of the project and may be used to enhance the project.

_____ Signed _____ Date: July 15, 1996

DWIGHT M. BOWER
Director

This Policy is based on:

- 23 CFR Part 771.111 and 790 and 795, and 40 CFR, Part 1500 through 1508
- Section 23-128 and 49-1602(d), 1604(i), 1607a(f), and 1607a-1(d), U.S. CODE
- Section 21-116 and 117, and 40-121 and 310, IDAHO CODE
- Volume 7, Chapter 7, Section 5, FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY PROGRAM MANUAL
- Title VI, Civil Rights Act
- B-13-02, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR LOCATION AND DESIGN DETERMINATIONS
- Decision by the Director

Department-wide supervision and coordination assigned to:

- Chief Engineer

Direction for activity and results delegated to:

- District Engineers, Roadway Design Engineer, Public Involvement Coordinator, and Public Hearing Officers

Former dates of A-13-02:

6/4/71, 9/28/76, 4/1/81, and 4/25/86

Cross-reference to related Administrative Policies:

- A-01-15, RELEASE AND RESTRICTION OF DEPARTMENT RECORDS
- A-06-28, AUTHORITY FOR PROJECT EXPENDITURES
- A-09-01, ANNUAL REPORT
- A-14-10, HIGHWAY SYSTEM ADJUSTMENTS
- A-20-01, RELEASE OF DEPARTMENT INFORMATION TO MEDIA
- A-20-03, PUBLIC HEARINGS
- A-20-04, PUBLIC HEARING OFFICERS

BOARD POLICY B-20-03

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The process of ensuring that the public is involved in transportation decisions and activities applies to all transportation projects and begins early in the project development stage. Preliminary scoping meetings, public information meetings, and public hearings provide the department with the opportunity to share information, summarize studies, review proposed alternatives and any new developments, and receive input from the public on proposed transportation projects. The public shall be afforded early and continuing involvement in the identification of social, economic, and environmental impacts, as well as impacts associated with relocation of individuals, groups, or institutions.

The Director shall establish public involvement guidelines for all department-proposed transportation projects. Public input shall be sought throughout the life of any project and may be used to enhance the project.

Public hearings shall be held to provide the public with the opportunity to receive information, discuss findings and proposed actions, and offer comments about transportation projects in the following areas:

- Purpose and need for the proposed project.
- Major location/design features or location of new routes.
- Alternate courses of action.
- Social, economic, and environmental effects.
- Modification of the state highway system.
- Transportation planning.

The Board shall be notified in advance of all department-sponsored public information meetings and public hearings. Board members have the option of attending these meetings and/or hearings to meet with and hear the concerns of their constituents, but do not take testimony. A Public Hearing Officer shall be appointed for all public hearings to officially receive public testimony. Oral, written, and other information may be submitted to the Hearing Officer as part of the official testimony.

After the public information meeting and/or hearing procedures are completed, or an opportunity for public involvement has been given and/or waived, the Board or appropriate management staff shall complete project determinations and inform the public.

Public Hearings Board Policy B-20-03: Page 2

Approved by the Board on:

 Signed
 CHARLES L. WINDER
 Board Chairman

Date: 6/21/96

This policy based on:

- 23 CFR Part 771.111 and 790 and 795, and 40 CFR, Part 1500 through 1508
- Section 23-128 and 49-1602(d), 1604(i), 1607a(f), and 1607a-1(d), U.S. CODE
- Section 21-116 and 117, and 40-121 and 310, IDAHO CODE
- Title VI, Civil Rights Act
- Decision by the Idaho Transportation Board

Implemented by Administrative Policy:

- A-20-03, PUBLIC HEARINGS

Former dates of B-20-03:

8/7/79 and 12/7/83

(combined with B-09-05, PUBLIC HEARINGS ON STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEMS ACTIONS)

Cross-reference to related Board Policies:

- B-11-01, TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
- B-13-02, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR LOCATION AND DESIGN DETERMINATIONS
- B-13-03, HIGHWAY LOCATION POLICY RELATING TO PROPERTY OWNER LINES
- B-14-08, MOVEMENT OF UTILITIES
- B-14-10, HIGHWAY SYSTEM ADJUSTMENTS
- B-19-01, FINANCING CONSTRUCTION OF STATE HIGHWAYS IN CITIES
- B-19-05, FEDERAL AID URBAN FUNDS
- B-19-10, LOCAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (STP) FUNDS
- B-20-01, RELEASE OF DEPARTMENT INFORMATION TO THE MEDIA

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY A-20-03

PUBLIC HEARINGS

To ensure that the public is involved in transportation decisions and activities the Idaho Transportation Department shall inform the public and seek their input through preliminary scoping meetings, public information meetings, and public hearings. Public meetings and/or hearings shall be held to provide the public with the opportunity to receive information, discuss findings and proposed actions, and offer comments.

The project scope, intensity of interest, and level of impact determines the number, extent, and type of public involvement. The Division Administrator and/or other delegated personnel in coordination with the Public Involvement Coordinator shall determine the strategy for public involvement and the types of opportunities the public will have for submitting comments and information. Public hearings may be waived when public awareness and support is apparent and non-controversial.

The following public hearing process primarily details highway project hearings. Other public hearings for utility movement, public transportation, aeronautics, etc. may modify this process to meet specific regulations and concerns. The Department shall follow a multi-faceted public involvement process that includes, but is not limited to:

- Notice of preliminary scoping meetings, public information meetings and public hearings presented in a variety of formats - legal notices, newspaper and radio ads, invitation letters, etc. - including translated material to ensure involvement by minorities when necessary.
- Meetings and hearings conducted at an acceptable site located as near to the project as possible, and for a number of hours convenient for those affected by the proposed project.
- The format of the meetings and hearings is similar to an open house in that the public is invited to drop by any time during specified hours.
- A short video may be shown to provide an overview of the proposed project and hearing process. Hearing information is presented in displays and in a printed brochure. Department personnel, and other partner agencies, when appropriate, shall staff the information meetings/hearing and share project details with the public.
- A Hearing Officer is appointed to ensure that public opinion is solicited and the public's testimony receives proper recognition in any transportation project decision. Oral testimony, written statements, and other information from the public may be submitted to the Hearing Officer as part of the official testimony until the previously-announced closing date. Oral testimony shall be tape recorded during the public hearing and later transcribed. With the concurrence of the involved Division or District, the Hearing Officer may extend the date of accepting official testimony should the need become apparent.
- Public input shall be sought throughout the life of any project and may be used to enhance the project. Public input that is received before or after the official testimony period is added to the project file.

Public Hearings Administrative Policy A-20-03: Page 2

Guidelines and strategies for public involvement shall be maintained in the Design Manual, Section 375, Public Involvement.

A design study report documenting the department's considerations of environmental, social, and economic impacts of the project, summarizing significant design/location considerations and recommendations, and including the certification of public input for projects where a public hearing was held shall be compiled for each proposed project.

- In situations where a proposed project is contested and for location and design determinations that are subject to Section 40-130, Idaho Code, the design study report, the public input certification, staff recommendations, and other supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Board for further consideration and/or determination.
- If the project is not controversial and has public support, the project determination shall be approved by the appropriate management personnel.

Signed _____ Date: July 15, 1996
 DWIGHT M. BOWER
 Director

This policy based on:

- 23 CFR Part 771.111 and 790 and 795, and 40 CFR, Part 1500 through 1508
- Section 23-128 and 49-1602(d), 1604(i), 1607a(f), and 1607a-1(d), US CODE
- Section 21-116 and 117, and 40-121 and 310, IDAHO CODE
- Title VI, Civil Rights Act
- B-20-03, PUBLIC HEARINGS
- Decision by the Director

Department-wide supervision and coordination assigned to:

- Division Administrators

Direction for activity and results delegated to:

- District Engineers, Roadway Design Engineer and other delegated staff, Public Involvement Coordinator, and Public Hearing Officers

Department procedures contained in:

- Design Manual, 14-489, Public Involvement

Former dates of A-20-03:

9/1/78, 8/27/79, 10/14/81, and 12/5/83

Cross-reference to related Administrative Policies:

- A-11-01, TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
- A-13-02, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR LOCATION AND DESIGN DETERMINATIONS
- A-14-06, APPROVAL OF PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS AND ESTIMATES
- A-14-08, MOVEMENT OF UTILITIES
- A-14-10, HIGHWAY SYSTEM ADJUSTMENTS
- A-19-01, FINANCING CONSTRUCTION OF STATE HIGHWAYS IN CITIES
- A-20-01, RELEASE OF DEPARTMENT INFORMATION TO THE MEDIA
- A-20-04, PUBLIC HEARING OFFICERS

Fulfilling Legal Responsibilities:

Public involvement is mandatory in order to meet federal requirements. Following is a list of federal legislation, regulations and policies that guide public involvement in project development. More information about each is available on the department Web site: <http://www.itd.idaho.gov/>

- 23 USC 128
- 23 USC 109 (h)
- Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act—a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (HR3)
- Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act 1991 (ISTEA)
- Transportation Efficiency Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21)
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- 23 CFR 771.111 (h)
- 23 CFR 771.111 (2) (ii)
- 23 CFR 771.119 (e) and (f)
- 23 CFR 771.123 (g) and (h)
- 40 CFR 1500 – 1508
- Public Involvement for Location and Design Determinations Board Policy B-13-02 (see Appendix 2)
- Public Involvement for Location and Design Determinations Administrative Policy A-13-02 (See Appendix 2)
- Public Hearings Board Policy B-20-03 (See Appendix 2)
- Public Hearings Administrative Policy A-20-03 (See Appendix 2)



**Public Involvement Coordinator
Idaho Transportation Department
PO Box 7129
Boise, ID 83703-1129**

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**U.S. 93, Junction I-84 to Junction Idaho 25
Jerome County, Idaho
NH-2390(134)
Key #7800**

The Idaho Transportation Department monitors attendance to ensure equal opportunity. We appreciate your providing this information. This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for affirmative action purposes, as specified by law (CFR 42.21.9).

Name (Please print or write clearly)	Title/Representing	Address (City, State, and ZIP)	Phone	Please check the appropriate boxes	
				<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Disabled	<input type="radio"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> White
				<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Disabled	<input type="radio"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> White
				<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Disabled	<input type="radio"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> White
				<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Disabled	<input type="radio"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> White
				<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Disabled	<input type="radio"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> White
				<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Disabled	<input type="radio"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> White
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				<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Disabled	<input type="radio"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> White

		Sign-in sheet will become part of the public record for this project.
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Documentation Recommendations and Responsibilities:

Document	District	Office of Communications	Resident's File
Relevant Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) public involvement comments	X	X	
Public involvement scoping questions and answers	X		Include
Public involvement scope of work	X	X	
Public involvement plan	X	X	Include
Other public involvement materials (brochures, newsletters, press releases, print ads, etc.)	X	X	
Stakeholder database/mailling list (primary responsibility is with the district)	X	X	Include
Efforts to reach and involve low-income, minority, disabled, and LEP populations in the planning process Informal comments	X		
Letters or other comments given to ITD	X		
Public informational meeting/workshop paperwork (sign-in sheets, notification materials, informational materials, photos, testimony and comments)		X	
Public hearing documents (sign-in sheets, notification materials, informational materials, photos, oral and written testimony)		X	
ITD responses to public comments	X	X	
Record of Decision	X	X	Include
Project's media coverage	X	X	Include
Final communication with project stakeholders regarding decision and expected construction timeline	X	X	Include
Public involvement summary for the Location Design Study Report	X	X	
Public involvement summary for the resident's file	X	X	Include

Title VI Statements:

Title VI Statement: English Version

Title VI

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. ITD assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any ITD service, program, or activity. The department also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the department will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency. For accommodations call the Office of Communications at (208) 334-8005; TTD (208) 334-4458

Title VI Statement: Spanish Version

Título VI

El Departamento de Transporte de Idaho (ITD, Idaho Transportation Department) se compromete a cumplir con el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964 y con los reglamentos y directivas relacionadas. El ITD garantiza que, por causa de su raza, color, origen, sexo, edad o discapacidad, nadie será excluido de participar, ni se le negarán los beneficios o será sujeto de ninguna forma de discriminación en ningún servicio, programa o actividad del ITD. El departamento se compromete a realizar todos los esfuerzos por evitar la discriminación a través del impacto que causen sus programas, políticas y actividades en poblaciones minoritarias o de bajos ingresos. Asimismo, el departamento tomará las medidas razonables para ofrecer un acceso inteligible a los servicios a personas con conocimientos limitados de inglés. Para obtener ayuda, llame a Gwen Smith al (208) 334-4444; TTD (208) 334-4458.

Title VI Notice: Short Version, English and Spanish

The following may be used in ads, notices, and other materials where space is very limited:

“Attention - If you would like information regarding this project in Spanish, please call (208) 334-4444.”

“Atención - Si usted quiere la información acerca de este proyecto en Español, llame por favor al (208) 334-4444.”

NEPA Explanation:

THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

(Also known as NEPA)

What is it and why do we have to do it?

NEPA is a procedural statute (40 CFR sec 1500) for decision-making during federal projects which assures proper analysis of social, economic and environmental impacts are performed.

This project is federally funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and as such is subject to federal regulation. The Idaho Transportation Department is required to prepare a “NEPA” document for the FHWA.

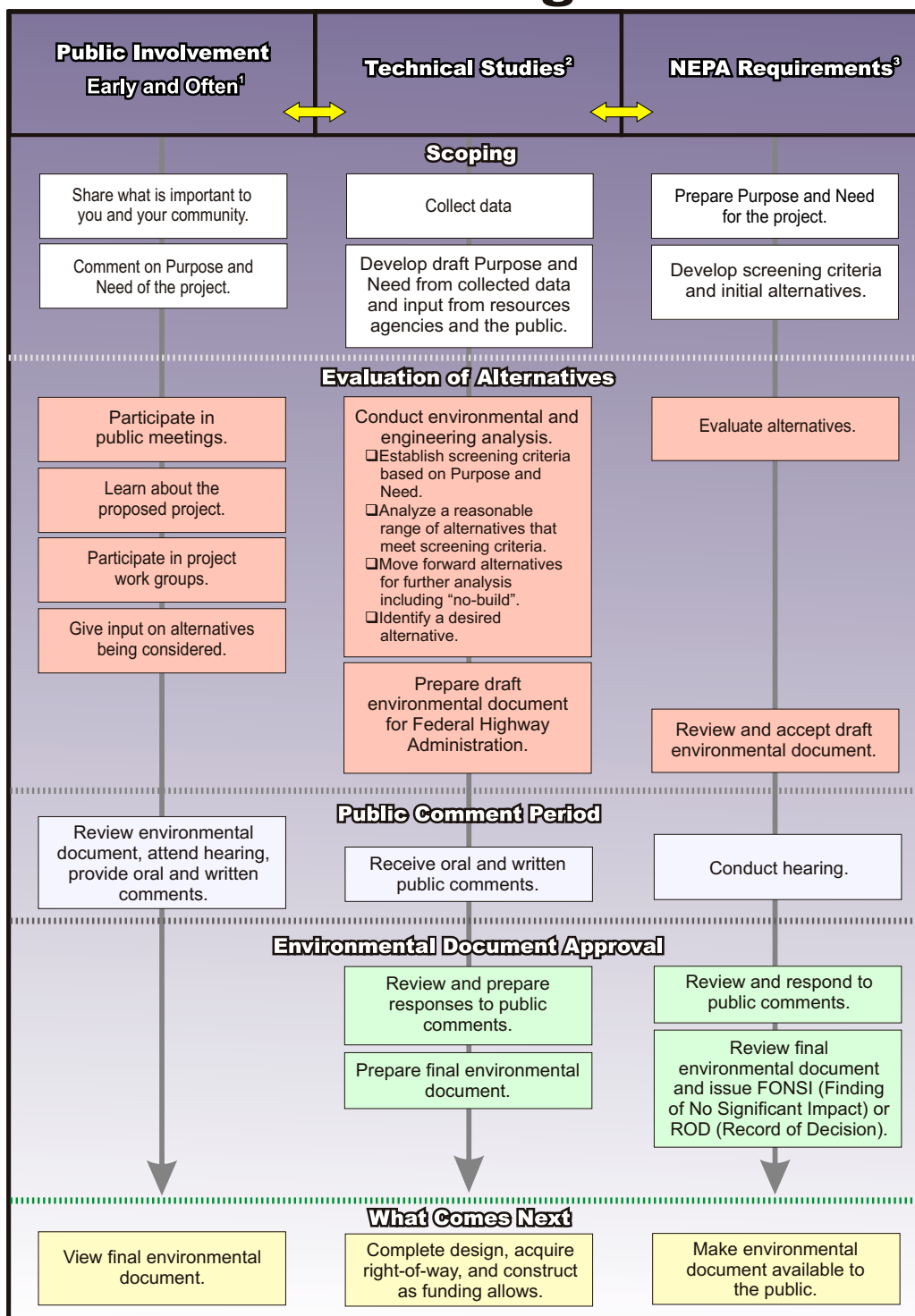
The NEPA document will study a reasonable range of alternatives based on the Purpose and Need, consider appropriate mitigation for impacts, include interagency coordination and consultation, provide the public opportunity to participate in the process and comment on the project.

At the end of the process the studies, agency coordination, public participation and comments are organized into a document called an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The document is approved by the FHWA and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or a Record of Decision (ROD) is given by the FHWA to complete the process.

A conceptual flow chart is provided to illustrate the process.



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) A Decision Making Flow Chart



1 - General public provides technical assistance and input on project.

2 - Idaho Transportation Department develops the NEPA document as an agent for Federal Highway Administration with input from resource agencies, regulatory agencies, local governments and MPO's.

3 - Federal Highway Administration is responsible for ensuring compliance with NEPA.

